

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

NATIONAL BOARD OF READING & WRITING

NEW READING

STYLING

FOR THE



MARCH,
1955

See Introductory Notes

Elementary ENGLISH

An official organ of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

704 S. Sixth St., Champaign, Ill.

FOUNDED, 1924, BY C. C. CERTAIN

JOHN J. DEBOER, *Editor*

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

(Send all editorial communications to 300 Gregory Hall, The University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL

President

John C. Gerber

First Vice President

Mrs. Luella B. Cook

Second Vice Presidents

David Russell

Elementary Section

Edna L. Sterling

High School Section

Virginia Belle Lowers

College Section

Brice Harris

Past Presidents

Lou LaBrant

Harlen M. Adams

ELEMENTARY SECTION COMMITTEE

Edna L. Sterling

Chairman

Irean Coyner

Muriel Crosby

Agnes Gunderson

John H. Treanor

John L. Ames

Alvina Treut Burrows.

Executive Secretary

of the Council

J. N. Hook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 134 | By Way of Introduction |
| 135 | Theodore Seuss Geisel
LORRENE LOVE ORT |
| 143 | If Parents Help with Reading
E. W. DOLCH |
| 147 | Creative Activities in the Language Arts
RUTH G. STRICKLAND |
| 150 | Language for Today's Children—A Review
ALVINA TREUT BURROWS |
| 154 | Motivation for Creative Writing
ROBERT D. HALL |
| 156 | Recreating the Past for Pupils
HARVEY OVERTON |
| 164 | Developing Spelling Skills
SISTER JOSEPHINA, C. S. J. |
| 167 | Developmental Interrelationships Among
Language Variables
CLYDE MARTIN |
| 172 | Counciletter |
| 176 | The Education Scene
Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS |
| 182 | Professional Publications |
| 183 | Books for Children
Edited by MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT AND
MARGARET MARY CLARK |

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH is published monthly from October through May by the National Council of Teachers of English at 704 S. Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois. Subscription price \$4.00 per year; single copies 55 cents. Orders for less than a year's subscription will be charged at the single copy rate. Postage is prepaid on all orders from the United States, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Panama Canal Zone, Republic of Panama, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, Hawaiian Islands, Philippine Islands, Guam, Samoa Islands, Virgin Islands and Spain. Postage is charged extra for Canada and for all other countries in the Postal Union as follows: 24 cents on annual subscription (total \$4.24), on single copies 3 cents (total 58 cents). Patrons are requested to make all remittances payable to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH in checks, money orders, or bank drafts. Claims for missing numbers should be made within the month following the regular month of publication. The publishers expect to supply missing numbers free only when losses have been sustained in transit and when the reserve stock will permit. All communications should be addressed to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 704 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois. Entered as second class matter December 30, 1942, at the post office at Champaign, Illinois under the Act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at Seymour, Indiana.

Copyright, 1955 by THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH.

Printed in the U. S. A.

Heath

Arithmetic —
a new series

LEARNING TO USE ARITHMETIC

Science —
a new series

HEATH ELEMENTARY SCIENCE

Basal Reading —
*a new copyright
edition*

READING FOR INTEREST

History —
a new copyright edition

HISTORY ON THE MARCH

Social Studies —
a new edition

OUR GROWING WORLD

Reading-Literature —
a new series

READING ROUNDUP

First Books —
a new series

THE FIRST BOOKS

**IN EVERY
ELEMENTARY FIELD**

Heath offers you

**A WEALTH OF
NEW
MATERIAL
for 1955**



D. C. Heath and Company

SALES OFFICES: NEW YORK 14 CHICAGO 16 SAN FRANCISCO 5 ATLANTA 3 DALLAS 1
HOME OFFICE: BOSTON 16

By Way of Introduction . . .

The cover picture this month is taken from *The Vanilla Village*, by Priscilla Carden (Ariel Books, Pellegrini and Cudahy). The illustrator is Jay Hyde Barnum. Vanilla Village is an exciting story of a little Indian boy in the remote mountains of Mexico. The illustration continues our series from children's books about other countries.

MRS. LORRENE LOVE ORT wrote her excellent article on Dr. Seuss while getting ready for doctoral examinations and for new teaching assignments at the University School. She called 1954 her Hurdle Year. Readers will agree that Mrs. Ort's commitments did not interfere with her producing a very illuminating analysis of an outstanding contemporary writer.

Professor E. W. DOLCH is one of our favorite contributors. Many thousands of teachers have enjoyed his help in the teaching of reading. In his article in the current issue he gives advice on a topic of perennial interest to elementary school teachers and administrators.

DR. RUTH G. STRICKLAND's article on creative activities was given before the National Council of Teachers of English at

Detroit during the Thanksgiving weekend. Dr. Strickland is author of a popular recent book on the language arts in the elementary school.

DR. ALVINA TREUT BURROWS, the well-known co-author of *They All Want to Write* and author of *Teaching Children in the Elementary Grades*, reviews in this issue the important new volume of the Council's Curriculum Commission on the language arts in the elementary school.

ROBERT D. HALL, who has contributed to *Elementary English* before, is now teaching in the Army Dependent Schools in Frankfurt, Germany. The examples he quotes in this article were written by fourth grade children in the Buffalo State Teachers College Campus School.

Spelling continues to be one of the perplexing problems of all elementary school teachers. Sister Josephina gives valuable practical advice for attacking the problem.

CLYDE MARTIN's discussion of the interrelationships among language variables in children of the first grade is a summary of her doctoral study of the same subject.

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

XXXII

MARCH, 1955

No. 3

LORRENE LOVE ORT

Theodore Seuss Geisel - The Children's Dr. Seuss

What strange insights the little known facets of an author reveal! Consider these: a zoo keeper's son who never could draw *real* animals, a would-have-been-but-never-quite-was professor of English poetry, an enthusiastic digger of Peruvian mummies, a green-thumbed grower of California camellias, an affectionate master of Irish setters, a designer of advertising campaigns, a writer of movies, and a tea drinker "extraordinaire" who delights in sipping his brew with Zen Buddhist priests in Japan! Further, this magician of both pen and brush resides in a home called "The Tower," and, if his own turret tales have veracity, he occasionally does his neighbor's wash!

Here, then, is Theodore Seuss Geisel—the children's Dr. Seuss.

It would seem that what we are has a very persistent way of poking its determined nose into all that we do or attempt to do. Even so is this true in the records of Theodore Seuss Geisel. If we know that as

part of his responsibilities as Superintendent of the Park System in Springfield, Massachusetts, the father of Dr. Seuss is responsible for running the local zoo, the "why" of all the many birds, beasts, and fish which keep bobbing about in his son's books becomes readily understandable.



Dr. Seuss

But Geisel the Younger, though surrounded in youth by conventional animals of conventional shapes, forms, and hues, has seen fit to create bipeds, quadrupeds, polypeds, and nopeds in unconventional and definitely new designs. The surprising truth is, furthermore, that though this son of a zoo-keeping father *should* be able from his youthful associations to

draw *reasonably real* animals, he doesn't draw *reasonably real* animals—not at all, and the reasonable answer to all this is (and this he cheerfully nods in affirmation)—he can't! Whenever artist Seuss

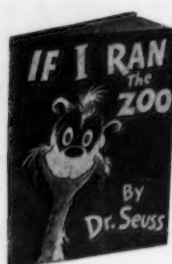
Mrs. Ort is a teacher at the University School of the Ohio State University.

commences to draw a *reasonably real* horse, or moose, or elephant, these unco-operative beasts somehow end up on his titillated drawing board all out of kilter and laughing hilariously at their amazed creator who tried his pencil-chewing best to make them look *reasonably real*.

Of course, if he were made of more ordinary dimensions, Dr. Seuss would probably flip his brush in disgust, mutter something about not being able to draw the tail of a whale, and stop then and there, but not T. S. Geisel! He capitalizes on what he considers to be his artistic and graphic deficiencies, and then he proceeds to create worlds of wonder, delight, and true merriment for all children from six to sixty who haven't learned to care a feather or a fig for that reality which is seen only by unseeing Lord Droons and their prosaic ilk and breed.

The "deficiencies" that Dr. Seuss considers to be his are certainly compensated (if, indeed, they exist at all!) by clean and virile color, simplicity and strength of line, a vibrant rhythm of composition, a wonderful and versatile ability to suggest action, daring, and emotion, and his own special wherewithal to capture graphically the imaginative flight of a true teller of tales. Although much of his art form suggests cartoon work, his is a variety that teases and stretches the imagination much further than most current cartooning attempts to do.

As one aspect of this author's graphic work, consider the matter of movement. Dr. Seuss secures much story momentum through illustration, and particularly is this so in books that have a reviewing-stand and dress-parade nature, such as: *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*



(somewhat), *McElligot's Pool*, *And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street*, *If I Ran The Zoo*, *Thidwick The Big Hearted Moose* (to some degree), and *Scrambled Eggs Super*. In these

stories swiftness of motion depends largely on a rapid succession and addition of things—a sequence of incredible and incessant hats, a finny review of the sea's saltier characters, a colossal parade of animal-drawn vehicles, an introduction to the eye-popping members of swaggering Gerald McGrew's new zoo, a miscellaneous assortment of some persistent and parasitic guests, and a pilfering peek at a clutch of mighty good eggs that get cleverly "fowled" in the drawing! In most of the other tales, and in parts of some of the afore-mentioned, the plot seems to take the dominant lead in setting the pace and the environment in which the illustrative material operates, but in all Seuss publications there is a splendid unification in the total format of text, type, illustration, placement, and an over-all just-rightness which is certainly laudatory, if the spontaneous acclaim given by children to all Seuss tales is any gauge of merit.

Secure suspense is another necessary ingredient which Seuss champions with his brush. If, for example, Seuss baits his young audience with the lip-pursing drama of danger, he also adds a saucy feather of



fun to his illustrations to serve as a sure and satisfying leaven of levity. Thus, though the artist-writer may depict young master Cubbins teetering precariously on the wind-swept brink of a mile-high turret wall . . . and though an impish breeze may friskily tease the silky plumes of Bartholomew's ridiculously huge and unbalanced headgear . . . and though young Duke Wilfred stands poised and eager to push the astounding young hatter from the Kingdom of Didd into quite another kingdom, there is still the imposing figure of King Derwin who lays a sure and imperial grip on his obstreperous nephew's immature collar, and, lastly, there is that assuring and solid lump of Bartholomew projecting out behind which will surely serve to stay him from any possible downward descent!

Horton and Thidwick also know a thing or two about dangerous living, and it is this noble and generous twosome who, on different occasions, face the terrors of a firing squad and manage to survive quite nicely! Horton's portly but heroic self is well suited to illustrations representing secure suspense, for it is quite apparent from the very beginning of the tale (*Horton Hatches the Egg*) that if Horton can be drawn withstanding as many different temperatures as a U.S. postal carrier in order to protect one mere Mayzie Bird egg he can *and will weather a threatening* storm of ballistic adversity and do it all with folded arms and a stoic countenance. Thidwick, on the other hand, is aided and abetted by both nature and Dr Seuss in his once-in-a-lifetime escape from a fate worse than that of a Bingle Bug, but even when Thidwick is portrayed (and almost betrayed) while facing five exuberant hunters there is certainly enough of Thidwick

& Co. to withstand falling rocks and sighting snipers. Here the text also comes to the rescue with these suggestive lines concerning the big-hearted and well-stocked moose:

He gasped! He felt faint! And the whole world grew fuzzy!
Thidwick was finished, completely. . . .
. . . or WAS he . . . ?

Suspense? Yes, but *secure* suspense.

Seuss also brings to his pages of illustration a subtle but gentle brush sense of satire. Consider well the hoydenish Wickershams, the perplexed and concerned Twiddler Owls, the nonchalant and totally fly-by-night Mayzie Bird, and the dour and doubting farmer of McElligot's Pool.

Sometimes the use of color in Seuss's illustrations takes on a new dimension, also. Green, for example, has come to have a new and very special meaning for at least one group of young children. "Oobleck! Oobleck!" they piped and chortled to a perplexed cook in the school cafeteria when she served them small mounds of steaming green peas!

Think back again on the pages depicting the Stroodel in *Scrambled Eggs Super*. These pages are produced in a most yolky yellow, and there—standing lonely and unique amidst all this eggy and very sticky color—is the storky Stroodel of whom Peter T. Hooper remarks:

But I passed up the eggs of a bird called a Stroodel
Who's sort of a stork, but with fur like a poodle.
For they say that the eggs of this kind of a stork
Are gooeey like glue and they stick to your fork,
And the yolks of these eggs, I am told,
Taste like fleece
While the whites taste like very old bicycle grease.

Often there is a quiet and knowing touch of sensitivity, too, as well as the always abundant and rollicking sense of humor which spills exuberantly over most of the pages. This dimension for beauty is expressed very charmingly in the illustration of the Kwigger in *Scrambled Eggs Super*, and many little children think Dr. Seuss did a lovely bit of piscatorial painting in the picture of the fish that likes flowers in *McElligot's Pool*.

But the important thing about Seuss's paintings is that they so happily reflect the text—or the text so beautifully expresses the illustrations—that the total effect is a little like an old riddle, for surely Dr. Seuss has achieved a "which came first?" type of fine unity and blending.

For children there is, indeed, another vital view-point concerning the artistic talents of Dr. Seuss. As one second-grader happily pointed out, "Why, he draws just like ME!" Many a reluctant child who has been fearful of expressing himself either graphically or verbally has been so "taken in" by Seuss's casual charm and random and joyous sampling of form, words, and color that he finds himself daring to sample these media for himself. Part of this inspired confidence seems to be in the fact that there is never—in the magical land of Seuss—a talking down to the young reader either in words or through the art form, but, rather, both seem to have that generous hospitality that genuinely invites the reader and/or listener to "come on in and just make yourself at home and, above all, enjoy yourself!", and this they most certainly do.

Sincere graciousness and hospitality which the Seuss stories represent are arts which, unfortunately, are not perfected

over night, nor is a writer's grace and skill. "It takes a bit of doing!" as our Channel friends would remind us, or, to put it into the more colorful vernacular of the Army, it takes downright "spit 'n' polish." To achieve the smoothness of the finished product which the Mulberry Street story finally represented when sent to the publishers took almost one year of work—or "sweat," as Seuss is wont to refer to it. One year for thirty pages! Nearly every line of Seuss print is worked and re-worked sixteen or seventeen times like a pliable lump of dough until at last it emerges all smooth and satiny, and then it's ready. But, though the process is painstakingly done, Seuss is as steadfast to his tale-telling as willing Horton was to his egg-hatching—and with results just as delightful and amazing. With the exception of the war years, during which time T. S. Geisel served as an Army information and education officer, the Seuss contributions to children's literature have been quite happily consistent since 1937:

And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street—1937

The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins—1938

The King's Stilts—1939

Horton Hatches The Egg—1940

McElligot's Pool—1947

Thidwick The Big Hearted Moose—1948

Bartholomew And The Oobleck—1949

If I Ran The Zoo—1950

Scrambled Eggs Super—1953

Horton Hears A Who!—1954

That first book, *And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street*, was not unlike a sneak preview of wondrous things to

come. Who would have guessed that a blue-hided elephant would later sire the heroic figure of Horton? Or who could have made a random guess that the Arctic contingent—reindeer, sled, and occupants—would eventually simmer down into one concentrated personality with horns—Thidwick! Indeed, young Marco himself takes a curtain call again in *McElligot's Pool*. And could it have been that the total conglomeration that dazzle-dazzled young Marco there on Mulberry Street was to become the imaginative spark that set off the "call of the wild" represented by such future animalistic fantasies as *McElligot's Pool*, *If I Ran the Zoo*, and *Scrambled Eggs Super*? The candle of Dr. Seuss's zoo-some youth was certainly having a hey-day in projecting its beams a far, far distance.

Of the ten books published from 1937 through 1954 only three have been written in prose form—*The 500 Hats Of Bartholomew Cubbins*, *The King's Stilts*, and *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*, and, of these three, the one entitled *The 500*



Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins seems to fall into the same position as the last of the five-hundred hats—on top and in a most kingly position.

Of the books which have been written in rhyme, the Horton books—*Horton Hatches the Egg* and *Horton Hears a Who!*—have a few overtones which possibly might be appreciated more fully by somewhat older children than by the younger set.

That T. S. Geisel tends to express his printed self most frequently in a poetic form harks back to his earlier days at Oxford when and where he studied to become a professor of English poetry and then became so enmeshed in drawing and doing his own creative writing that he finally, and very carefully, bedded down one little dream and charged merrily off on another.

Thus, or so it would seem, when a poetic background is combined with a zoo-ish one and is further fused with the romance of travel, all sorts of taggle-tail ends



commence combusting within one—particularly is this true if the “one” is a Dr. Seuss, and think what happens when those capricious taggle-tails start playing a fast game of tag with themselves! Why, when one taggle-tail tags another taggle-tail properly, a brand new name is created. Just listen to a few: a Ruffle-necked Salama-goox, a Mop-noodled Finch, a Beagle-beaked-bald-headed Grinch, some Single-file Zummzian Zuks, a Mt. Strookoo Cuckoo, a Moth-Watching Sneth, a Bombastic Aghast, a Bustard (a bird, Dr. Seuss informs us, that eats custard with a sauce made of mustard!), a scraggle-foot Mulligatawny, an Obsk—“a sort of a kind of a Thing-a-ma-Bobsk,” a flock of Bippi-no-Bungus, a Zinn-a-zu Bird, and a whole giggling bevy of tongue tickling others.

And the places these taggle-tailed critters come from are quite something to think about, too. There’s Motta-fa-Potta-fa-Pell, for example. Seuss hints that:

In a country like that, if a hunter is clever,
He’ll hunt up some beasts that you never
saw ever!

Again, the author may direct his readers to the “Far Western part of south-east North Dakota,” or even to Fa-Zoal which is somewhere slightly beyond the North Pole!

To arrive in these unlikely and utterly un-specific locations takes very special transportation, but Seuss solves this minor travel impediment. There is a Skeegle-Mobile for “up past the North Pole where the frozen winds squeal,” or, if a traveler should prefer to cast his fate upon the waters (the Polar ones, at that), he is offered a Katta-ma-Side, “a boat made of a sea leopard’s hide.” If capturing a Three-eyelashed Tizzy is the hunter’s idea of good

sport, ‘tis best, Seuss cautions, to ride on a Ham-ikka-Schnim-ikka-Schnam-ikka-Schnopp! But he’s a cautious one, that Seuss is, for he even has a Bad-Animal Catching Machine for beasts too dangerous to catch with bare hands!

This creator of tales extraordinary also qualifies as a tool and die maker although the products of his own fertile imagination have not—as yet—flooded the market! For those interested in going hunting for the eggs of a northerly Grice, for example, it would certainly be most prudent to carry that specially designed Seuss tool called a “Squitsch,” for, as Seuss cautions, “those eggs are too cold to be touched without which.”

There is something of an artful verbal juggler about author Seuss, too. Occasionally he tosses a stray musical dance term sky-high and catches more on the return bounce than he sent up—a Tizzle-Topped-Tufted Mazurka! Or a child’s game may suddenly be quite uniquely transformed into an animal’s name—a wild Tick-Tack-Toe. There’s a remnant of an Old English tailor-tack showing in Seuss’s background, too, for he christens three members of Gerald McGrew’s Zoo with needle-plied and fabric-conscious names—a Gusset, a Gherkin, and a Seersucker! And, being a gregarious gourmet of sounds, Seuss turns to other countries for new auditory combinations with which to tease young ears:

And, speaking of birds,
There’s the Russian Palooski,
Whose headski is redski and belly is blue-ski.
I’ll get one of them for my Zooski McGrewski.

Sound! It’s a tantalizing trickster when Seuss manipulates it. It’s as if the words so neatly pinned down to the pages by clean,

clear type were just on tip-toe with excitement to be turned loose by being read aloud, for it's the reading, the showing, the sharing and all that makes the Seuss books "shine."

The shine that glimmers on all sorts of young faces when a Seuss tale is shared reflects a personality that knows and understands the intricacies and delights of childhood. Here is an author whose full-blown fling with fantasy has veered sharply away from the pudding-sweet, "dear child" tales and has produced instead some exceptionally fine "honest injun" and mirth-tickling stories that bring into a front-and-center focus the scuff-toed young male of our society in all his fishin' pole and day-dreaming glory. Marco is the first to take the spotlight, and after his amazing vision there on Mulberry Street, he runs home to relate his breathless story to his skeptical father. This is the tale's realistic ending:

There was so much to tell, *I just couldn't begin!*

Dad looked at me sharply and pulled at his chin.

He frowned at me sternly from there in his seat,

"Was there nothing to look at . . . no people to greet?"

"Nothing," I said, growing red as a beet,

"But a plain horse and wagon on Mulberry Street."

And Marco who, in a repeat appearance in *McElligot's Pool*, is satisfied just to sit on the bank of a sluggish country pool while holding a cane pole and dreaming of fish voices pure boy philosophy at the book's close:

Oh, the sea is so full of a number of fish,
If a fellow is patient, he *might* get his wish!

And that's why I think
That I'm not such a fool
When I sit here and fish
In *McElligot's Pool*!

Who else but a male would ever conceive of a recipe for scrambled eggs as amazingly different as the one here concocted by Peter T. Hooper (and/or Dr. Seuss) in *Scrambled Eggs Super*:

All through with searching! All through with looking!

I had all I needed! And now for the cooking.

I rushed to the kitchen, the place where I'd stacked 'em,

I rolled up my sleeves. I unpacked 'em and cracked 'em

And shucked 'em and chucked 'em in ninety-nine pans,

Then I mixed in some beans. I used fifty-five cans,

Then I mixed in some ginger, nine prunes and three figs

And parsley. Quite sparsely. Just twenty-two sprigs,

Then I added six cinnamon sticks and a clove

And my scramble was ready to go on the stove!

And you know how they tasted?

They tasted just like . . .

Well, they tasted exactly,

Exactly just like . . . like Scrambled Eggs Super-Dee? Dooper? Dee-Booper,

Special de luxe

a-la-Peter T. Hooper.

In *The King's Stilts* a most masculine punishment is doled out to tyrannical Lord Droon—a punishment probably written by one who loathes the weekly aftermath of a big turkey dinner:

Then the king punished Droon in a most fitting way. He sent him to live by himself, with a guard of Patrol Cats, in that old deserted house with the sign that said, "Measles." And he made him eat Nizzards three times every day. Stewed Nizzards for lunch. Fried Nizzards for supper. And every other Thursday they served him Nizzard hash.

Another young man—one Gerald McGrew from *If I Ran The Zoo*—also fancies himself well along on the glory train as he swaggeringly narrates here:

The whole *world* will say, "Young McGrew's made his mark,
He's built a zoo better than Noah's whole Ark!

These wonderful, marvelous beasts that he chooses
Have made him the greatest of all McGrewses!"

Horton is the real hero of heroes, however, for it is he, the ever-faithful male, who, after seemingly endless calamities, hatches and keeps the amazing Elephant-Bird while Mayzie, the piqued and natural mother, looks on in a sputtery state of disgruntlement while observing all too late the woeful outcome of her own negligence and slothfulness.

Into the woof and weft of several of the stories come nudging little thoughts that do a bit of mental nibbling and provide a germ or so of wisdom on which to contemplate. It is often the kindly and considerate Horton who voices these sentiment, and in *Horton Hears a Who!* the kindly pachyderm reiterates time and again this humane belief: "A person's a person, no matter how small."

In *Horton Hatches the Egg* the elephant dares to brave all manner of danger in order to fulfill his commitment with a bird and an egg, and this he does by reminding himself at constant intervals of his own staunch credo:

I meant what I said
And I said what I meant. . . .
An elephant's faithful
One hundred per cent!

In *Bartholomew and the Oobleck* the Kingdom of Didd is saved from becoming totally submerged in a sea of sticky green "oobleck" (an immobilizing weather element only once put into use) when Bartholomew prevails upon proud King Derwin to admit that he is truly sorry for wishing that a new weather element might be added to the tried-and-true everyday varieties.

Even put-upon Thidwick, though he had five hundred pounds of reason to doubt it, staunchly maintains throughout his saga that ". . . a host, above all, must be nice to his guests."

True, the small nudges are there, but the tales supporting them are always wonderfully and deliciously funny. It's the light touch and the frivolous plights of the ridiculous characters that keep small nudges from becoming musty morals.

Anyone knows what the proof of a good pudding is, and in Dr. Seuss's case his "puddings" have certainly been "plum" good. Read aloud a Seuss book *once* to a young audience and there is a well-eared and big-eyed quiet, but read the book through *twice* and the audience will have disappeared! The second-time-'round everybody gets into the act and recites the yarn in snatches or by the yard! Here, then, is another Seuss who has unquestionably gained his Olympic Heights.

If Parents Help with Reading

Most teachers are agreed that, in general, parents should not try to help children to learn to read. The teachers are so keenly aware of the great part the parents have to play in helping the child in other directions. The parents, for instance, are teaching the child the social duties and social graces through the child's entertainment of his friends, and through the child's helping the mother to do her own entertaining. The parents are much concerned with the child's physical development and to this end are buying him athletic equipment and are teaching him how to use it, both for himself and for the team play that is bound to follow.

The parents are also trying to develop the child in all mechanical directions, by getting him tools and materials, and by teaching him how to make things with them. And the parents are especially concerned with developing the child in some or many of the arts; so they are getting for him leather, wood, clay, paints, and so on, and helping him to grow through trying to use these things. Finally, the world of music concerns the parents especially, as they get the child records to play, or get him musical instruments and encourage him to learn to play them.

The school is interested in helping the child in all of these fields, but it can make only a slight beginning. There is school music, and school art, and school crafts, and school athletics, and school social events, but these are very slight indeed compared to what the parents can do. So

the teachers are bound to feel that the parent has so many things to do, and things that are so important to the child, that the learning of reading can hardly be the chief interest of parents if they think of all these other activities.

On the other hand, the school is greatly interested in the teaching of reading. The school has worked at this problem for many years and has very special materials and methods for this purpose. Thus the teacher would nearly always urge the parent to leave the teaching of reading almost entirely to the school, and to be confident that the child will be taken care of in this direction.

There are, however, particular times and particular cases in which the teacher may want the parent to "help with reading." These are chiefly of two sorts. In one case, the child is going to do a lot of reading outside of school anyway; and the parent therefore becomes the one to guide such reading. In the other case, the child does not seem to be catching on in school as he should; the parent is worried, and therefore the teacher wishes to advise the parent about the help that the parent is very anxious to give.

For such cases, the teacher wants to give the parent the first and final guiding principle, "Home reading must be happy reading." A child "goes after" what makes him happy; he "draws back" from what does not make him happy. If a parent is

Professor Dolch is Professor-emeritus of Education at the University of Illinois.

not careful, a very sad thing will result; the child will get to "hate reading," as he will say when giving an honest reply to a direct question.

"Home reading must be happy reading" means, both for the advanced and for the retarded child, that each one must be reading something *easy for him and of interest to him*. Let the parent forget the problem of "keeping up with his grade" or of "getting ahead of his grade," and just leave the matter up to the child. Does he find a book too hard? Then that book is not the one for him at the moment. Does he find a book easy and interesting? Then get it for him and let him read it to himself, reread it if he wants to, read it to his younger brother, even read it to his mother as she does some routine chore.

Easy books must not be school books, for those are nearly always labeled with a grade. They must be "regular books," such as library books. And let not the parent be fooled by the cover of a book. The bookstores and even the drug stores are full of books that "look easy" because an artist has done fine work on the cover and on the illustrations. But are the words easy enough? Are the sentences easy enough? And are the ideas easy enough, that is, close enough to the particular child who is to do the reading?

Homes are full of easy-looking books that the children in those homes cannot read themselves. If the parent or teacher does not know books of the kind desired, she can find out. For books for the rapid reader, send to the National Council of Teachers of English¹, for a book list. For books for the slow reader, send to the writer for a list.

¹704 S. Sixth St., Champaign, Ill.

What, however, about the parent who finds that the child cannot read books, or will not read them? Here force is the last thing to try. It will make the parent's attempt to help become hopeless from the start. The only possible approach is through games. We have long known that arithmetic could be learned through games. Right now, there is a great vogue of games for the teaching of spelling. But there are also games to teach reading. The teacher will know about the bingo games which teach the most useful sight words. She will know about the lotto games which teach a child to hear sounds. And she will know the card games which teach the sounding of word elements.

A game has two very distinct advantages for any parent. *First*, the child will like to play a game, even though he has already been "set against" reading itself. The parent can play with the child; or an older brother or sister can play with him. If the game is properly planned, as a luck game so that anybody can win, winning will make the child enthusiastic. A teacher may even suggest to the parent that she should see that the child wins most of the time. Playing a game and winning will attract any child.

A *second* invaluable asset of the game is that it gives practice over and over again. A child may read a page once or twice; but he will play a game twenty times or more. In the learning of sight words, or of the sound of word parts, this repetition is absolutely necessary. The parent cannot plan the repetition that the teacher plans in the classroom. So the game gives the repetition along with a good time and pleasant associations.

A very special caution must be given,

however, by the teacher to every parent. Parents must be told again and again, in the playing of a game or otherwise, not to make the child a "reader-by-spelling." Parents themselves learned to read words first and then to spell these same words afterwards. For a generation that has been the plan; the "reading words" of one year are the "spelling words" of the next year. But parents have forgotten this. Their immediate tendency is to tell a child how to spell the word first. In fact, they often teach him not to look at the word itself but instead to look at each letter one at a time.

This "reading by spelling" is actually used in many places and it does just what it always used to do; it makes slow, laborious readers. Of course it cannot do anything else. The child has to "spell his way" through any reading matter, since that is the way he learned the words. So parents have to be told to "tell the word as a whole," and to have the child look at the word as a whole as he is told what it says.

In the case of using sounding to find out what a word "says," the child must be taught to say the *sound* of the word part, and not to say the name of the letters, which is spelling. In spelling, all letters have their *names*, but in reading, they all have *sounds*, which are usually different from their names. If nothing is said about this, parents are bound to think first of letter names instead of letter sounds, and spelling is almost certain to follow. That is the reason that most of the parents who are "helping their children" now wind up only in anger and frustration.

A *second* caution must be made about teaching by the sounding method. We have mentioned sounding games because

such games always emphasize a few sounding principles at a time. They do not try to teach all of sounding all at once. But if the parent tries to help a child sound the words he meets in his reading, the parent is sure to try to teach him too much sounding at one time. In fact, if anyone will take the first dozen long words he meets in any reading matter, he will find that practically all of sounding is met with.

If the parent, therefore, just tries to help the child "sound his words," the parent will be telling the child several dozen principles, one after the other, and without any practice on any one of them. It is a very bright child indeed who can learn the principles of sounding when they are thus crowded into every lesson in reading. Therefore most children cannot learn this way. The parent tells and tells and tells, and soon finds that he is telling the same thing he told five minutes ago. Then he or she loses patience and calls the child dumb or inattentive, and the reading lesson is over in tears or anger.

It is much safer for a parent who is helping a child just to tell the child the whole word that he meets with and go on. The child may learn that way; he is not at all likely to learn by trying to sound many, many letters in many, many words. So sounding is to be learned by some "one thing at a time" system, either in a workbook or a game. The teacher can tell the parent where to get these aids.

Some parents may say they "do not have time" to help a child. Such parents, we are sure, are just not aware of the unhappiness that poor reading brings day by day. Every day the child goes to school, knowing that he will be presented with tasks that he just cannot do because he

Creative Activities in the Language Arts in the Elementary School

A child who is creative is a child who does not think of life as requiring total conformity to patterns preferred by adults but who looks on life as offering opportunity at many points to create his own patterns of behavior and response. Creativeness in children comes from within and is the product of a kind of living. A child who is developing wholesomely and who lives with creative adults in an environment conducive to creativeness will manifest a very natural desire to explore, to expand, and to create. We stimulate creative activities in the elementary school not for the sake of the activities but for the purpose of developing creative individuals or, more exactly, of helping each individual build a self that is creative.

The school years are years in which the child's attitude toward himself as a learner, an achiever, a creative thinker and doer are formed. We who teach need to give thought to some of the components of a healthy personality.

In order to be truly creative, an individual must trust himself and the people about him and feel that as a person he has responsibility for making a contribution. He must have initiative and willingness to put forth the effort and energy to make his dreams concrete reality. Some children as well as adults are creative in the realm of ideas but bog down when it comes to doing the work to carry them out or lack the ability to work with others who could

carry them out. These qualities—trust in oneself and others, a sense of personal responsibility, initiative, and industry—are partially developed in most children during their pre-school years. But if a child at any age, at any grade level, fails to give of himself to the work of the group, the teacher's first task in working with him is to consider why this is true. Does he lack faith in himself or in the reactions of others? Does he not feel that he counts in the group—that the group needs whatever he has to give? Has he been deprived of the opportunity to develop initiative and joy in thinking and working? Perhaps he has never had the experience of the girl who said when she was doing something hard, "Don't you just love to feel your brain cells crackle?" Whatever lacks there are within a child that stand in the way of creative thought and creative response have to be given attention wherever and whenever they appear.

Creative activities begin with a creative teacher, one who is forever reaching out for personal enrichment. She is interested in trying new things, in knowing and dealing with interesting people. It does not matter what her personal hobbies and interests are—traveling, reading, music, theater, entertaining her friends, keeping a charming apartment, experimenting with new recipes, raising flowers, doing service

Dr. Strickland is Professor of Education at Indiana University.

does not read well enough. The child is well aware of his own failures, and most of the other children are aware of them too. But is the parent aware of them?

The teacher can suggest that every day the parent talk with the child a few moments about what he did in school, and how he got along. If the parent will do this, he or she will very soon find out about the child's unhappiness and perhaps his resentment at his position. Soon the parent will realize what is happening day by day to the child's feelings, and especially his feelings toward his school work.

Here another caution must be given. The parent may be inclined to scold the child in order to urge him to do better, but it must be realized that the child is already doing the best he can under the circumstances. He wants to get out of his difficulty even more than the parent wants him to. He does not need any urging; scolding will do no good. What he really needs is constructive help, the kind of help we have been outlining. If the teacher will make this help readily available, if she will have the books or games, or the names of the places where they can be secured, the parent will act at once and will be happy in the result. So the teacher must know just what will help and have it ready for the moment when it is needed.

In contrast, a parent may at times want her child to "get ahead" of the other children in the room. If the child does become a better reader than the others, it will do little harm. Every teacher has such chil-

dren, and they usually become the "independent readers" in any room. These children can work on their own projects, or they can look things up and report back to the others in the room. We must all give much thought to these children who are naturally ahead of the others in such a skill as reading. We use the children who are ahead in art to help in all our projects. Those who are ahead in physical sports take the lead in sports. Those who are ahead in writing are busy with stories, poems, and the like. Surely we can find a place for those who are ahead in reading. Only we must recall the rule given above, "Home reading must be happy reading."

To repeat, most teachers agree that, in general, parents should not try to help their children learn to read. There are so many other ways in which the parents can help their children's growth and learning. But if the teacher thinks that in a particular case the parent should help, the teacher will keep foremost the rule that "Home reading must be happy reading." To this end, she will see that easy and interesting books are secured. She will point out the kinds of games and workbooks that will help. And she will give special cautions to avoid teaching children to spell rather than to read. In the teaching of sounding also, special cautions will be given to avoid hopelessly discouraging and confusing the child by trying to teach him everything at once. In these definite ways, school and home can cooperate in this most important work.

jobs for her church, the League of Women Voters, or the Boy Scouts. It is important that she be a person as well as a teacher—interesting to others and interesting to herself.

Creativeness flourishes in a creative environment where books, raw materials, and interest centers suggest opportunities and possibilities to boys and girls. Schoolrooms need to be studios and workshops where there is opportunity for talking, listening, and working alone and in a group. Alert, active, interested children are creative children. They want to know everything, to do everything, to test and try everything. From the studies of the Gluecks at Yale it appears possible that many of the youngsters who become juvenile delinquents are the youngsters who insist on being themselves and resist the shaping and molding techniques of traditional classrooms. Some of the qualities these researchers point out as characteristic of many delinquents are qualities which, with guidance, could make the individual a valuable contributor to society.

Creative experiences for children can be found at many points in the classroom day—in areas we do not commonly think of as creative. A lecturer recently said that nothing is real until it is encased in words. Experience and thought are more real to a child when he can express them in words. Almost every day in a modern classroom involves some planning which calls upon children to put into words their thoughts and potential action. Sharing is recreating one's own experience for others so that they can enter into it. A good report is one which makes it possible for the listeners to conjure up pictures and meanings from the words one chooses. Evaluating with chil-

dren helps them to gain insight into values that are often abstract and intangible and to express those values in words. Listening to stories and reading them call upon children to create in their own minds the mental pictures, moods, and feelings held by the author in his own writing. Dramatization is putting mental pictures into action.

Often a poem or a story does something special for a child; it lifts his sights, helps him to understand himself or his experiences, or enriches his mind and soul with new values and aspirations. Such an experience, as Tennyson said in his poem, "Ulysses," takes the child to a new archway through which gleams for him an untraveled world whose margin fades forever and forever as he moves. It opens up a world that lures him on, that does for him what Elizabeth Gray Vining did for the Crown Prince of Japan—opened windows on a wider world, wider in time, space, insights, and values. Experiences which lead a child beyond himself help him find a star to which to hitch his wagon, help him to see life as having values that transcend material ones—these are creative experiences.

Perhaps we have at some points been a little too eager to draw creative expression from children without giving enough to them or without sharing creative experience with them. In the new volume of the Curriculum Commission, *Language Arts for Today's Children*, is the story of a pageant called "The Children of the World" given by Maury School. The children furnished the ideas for the pageant and the teachers wove them into expression more beautiful than the children's

own and helped them to make their ideas and their dreams more real. It is not a case of the teacher taking children's work, as art teachers sometimes did in the distant past, and adding their own finishing touches to the children's product. It is rather a case of cooperating in creating a product which is better than either children or teacher might have created alone. Children need the aid of mature thinking and mature experience to make dreams come clear so that they can gradually be made into real experience.

There are many opportunities for creative thinking on the child's level in the field of science. The child who has experimented with all kinds of floating objects until he can state in his own way the law of floating bodies or has experimented with magnets and compass until he can synthesize and generalize his experiences into clear statements of principles has had experience in creative thinking. A child who played with finger paints in the three primary colors until he made the discovery that three colors could become many colors and shades and tints of color had had a creative experience.

Social studies abounds in opportunities to solve problems and find answers through experiences that are creative. Even arithmetic holds many possibilities. As children manipulate semi-concrete materials to work out combinations and processes they are doing what is for them a type of creative thinking.

The arts all work together for the child. He writes a story and illustrates it, or a letter to his mother and puts a gay border around it. He puts his words into a tune or his tunes into rhythmic movement. A child does not think of his experiences in terms of adult categories of subject matter nor adult classification of experiences. Life is all of one piece for him until we insist upon its being divided into segments.

The elementary school years are years in which the child is building the self he will be from that time onward. We help him with the building material and give what guidance we can with techniques for building and with design, but the child himself is at all times the builder. With opportunity and encouragement he can build a creative self; with overmuch insistence upon conformity to pattern he builds a conforming self. Faith in himself and others, a sense of personal worth and personal responsibility, initiative and industry—all elements that make up a healthy personality—are important to growth in creativeness. Our task is to learn where each child is in his self-building and to help him to take next steps. We must change our emphasis in the often-quoted verse from scripture to read, "Train up the child in the way *he* should go." There is creativeness in all children and in many types of experiences if we bring our own creative efforts and thoughts to bear on them.

Language for Today's Children - A Review

It is an honor to be asked to review this distinguished book.¹ Eagerly anticipated and well worth the waiting this beautifully turned out synthesis is a milestone in the National Council's publication plans. It is a milestone likely to become a monument. This discussion of it is undertaken with humility and with a deep sense of obligation.

Since feeling is so important an ingredient in language it is fitting to pay homage first to the warmth and sincerity of the whole volume. Its manner inspires confidence in teachers old and young. It conjures up pictures of cordial classrooms with children working hard and having time for laughing, playing, listening. It invites any casually interested adult into elementary schools as exciting places to sample the drama of young humans learning the ways of democracy.

This aura of color and vitality is achieved in several ways. One of them is the presentation of a tapestry of concrete and easily visualized detail including sample upon sample of children's talking and writing. Some of this detail is narrative episode fresh from many a classroom. Some of the detail is to be found in the samples of children's writing and some in records of their oral language. These convincing accounts of language in action lay down the firm base of reality which gives strength and liveness to the whole invigorating treatise.

One of the distinctive accomplishments of the authors is the way in which children's literature constantly is woven

into the fabric of school life.

Of hundreds of instances, only two are sampled here:

"An equal sense of pride in their American heritage comes from the many good stories of other children in the American family, like Hetty and Hank in *Down, Down the Mountain* or E-Ye-Shure in *I Am a Pueblo Indian Girl* (p. 5)

"When a child brings a turtle to school, the teacher recalls Vachel Lindsay's 'The Little Turtle.' Or when Indians are being discussed, she produces Annette Wynne's 'Where We Walk to School Each Day.' (p. 57)

So naturally does this interplay occur between children's living and their literature that the world of children's books appears to be a natural habitat for teacher, parents, and children. Children's books *live* in this book. Thus a major 20th Century phenomenon—this unprecedented abundance of fine books for children—is artistically sketched into the whole of *Language Arts for Today's Children*.

The purposes of any book must be viewed in considering its values. The authors preface their volume with this statement: "How such a volume will be used depends upon who the reader is and what his purposes may be." In the light of the many uses to be made of their work they divide it into four parts.

Part I presents the sources of the lan-

¹LANGUAGE ARTS FOR TODAY'S CHILDREN. Prepared by the Commission on the English Curriculum of the National Council of Teachers of English, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954.

Dr. Burrows is Associate Professor of Elementary Education at New York University.

guage program, children's needs for language, knowledge of children's nature and the kinds of language programs which fit their needs.

Part II separates and details each of the four facets of language—reading, writing, talking, listening—and illustrates continuity of development in these aspects of language growth.

Part III restores these four phases of language to their normal relationship by considering the program in the primary grades, middle, and upper grades.

Part IV considers the language program in the perspective of curriculum building, goals, home and school relationships, and the important question of evaluation.

Integration of the arts and skills of language in a school wide program—indeed, a community wide program—is the very fibre of this book. The introductory paragraph in Chapter I illustrates this broad concern with language:

"Annette, at sixteen months capers before the television set in response to the dancing of the figures on the screen. She claps her hands and cried, 'Baby'. Michael, her brother, was five before he saw a television program. Their father, age thirty-one, had never heard a radio broadcast until he was twelve, but at twenty he talked to other pilots of his squadron in flight over Japan. The grandfather, now aged fifty-six, grew up in his village home without a telephone. A great aunt who is seventy-seven did not see a movie until her children were in high school, and she had read a newspaper only once weekly until after she was a grandmother." (p.1)

In keeping with this dramatic introduction, which so effectively illustrates the impact of ever accelerating communication upon today's living, the authors continue to treat language in the context both of time

and place.

For example, the chapter on Listening shows instances from the activities of a fifth grade class listening, discussing, writing, and using narrative illustration. And again in this excellent chapter concrete illustration and clearly stated principles illuminate the relationship between listening and individual maturity. Activities which improve listening are delineated and they are delineated against a clear and natural background.

The four facets of language-listening, speaking, reading and writing—although treated separately and carefully in Part II reveal their interrelationships through rich use of example. Only one of the many detailed illustrations from the chapter on speaking indicate how naturally this linkage is handled:

"A period of special emphasis on "ing" and "ed" endings, for example, may correlate with the learning about such inflectional endings in writing or in spelling and may lead the children to place them, spoken in a natural way, on the words they use in discussing the problem itself." (p. 130)

The chapter on reading, along with much valuable insight into the reading process, offers particularly helpful suggestion on grouping, individual instruction, and other problems of classroom teaching. The examples of children's work, in the chapter on writing, will fire many other children to portray themselves in the written medium.

Another technique of studying language in its natural setting is that of viewing the whole language program for the primary school, for the middle grades (Ch. 9) and for the upper grades (Ch. 10). Language as a medium for the whole curriculum as well as being an entity in

its own right is thus presented not as a dualism but as a normal unity. Clearly the analysis of the separate strands of language, serves to strengthen their fusion into the complex design of language and growth.

Although integration is obviously the watchword of this work, the needs of specialized knowledge are provided for in several ways. The chapters on the facets of language already discussed are one instance. Each of these chapters offers as much detailed and specific help as could be obtained in a single chapter in so comprehensive a treatment. In addition a really useful but not overwhelming bibliography supports and extends the content of each chapter.

Another service to those looking for special kinds of help lies in the section on curriculum building and evaluation. In addition to the value of its exemplary organization the careful indexing and documenting further serve the reader with special interests. In addition the Appendix contains a convenient listing of bulletins for teachers, magazines for children, and a complete listing of the several hundred books referred to in the text. Here is real service to those concerned with both integration and specialization.

In Part IV the chapter on Evaluation is, alone, worth the price of the book. Tests are neither worshipped nor despised but are seen in perspective as a part of an intelligently comprehensive appraisal of language growth. The teaching profession and countless children may profit endlessly from the wise application of these admonitions:

"Before applying a given test in a local situation the staff should determine

whether it is fair and reasonable or valuable to compare the particular group with the population on which the test was standardized. Above all tests should be selected *with the local curriculum in mind.*" (p. 407)

"The value of any testing program lies in the intelligent and careful interpretation of results. It should be clear that a median score is by definition the point above which and below which half the pupils lie. To expect an entire fifth grade class to be at or above norm for the fifth grade is to show ignorance of the meaning of the term." (p. 407)

Techniques of recording and sampling children's work over a period of years, of using anecdotal records of observation, of checking from informal lists developed from well considered goals are helpfully presented and illustrated in this forthright treatment of the important business of evaluating teaching and learning.

One concern of this reviewer, however, is the appearance of sociogram construction as an evaluation technique with no warnings to teacher who wish to avoid the eroding results of such formalized and structured peer evaluations. A not inconsiderable number of teachers who have lived with children before and after they have been asked to list their first, second, and third favorites for work or play or sitting together know how effectively children communicate these choices, both negatively and positively, to their parents, to other groups of children, to their temporary "enemies" as threats or bribes or reprisals! At least some safeguards need to be pointed out to those who covet socially constructive attitudes for today's children! The strength of this chapter, however, is far greater than this troubled item. Coming immediately after the chapter on Home

and School Co-operation and the chapter on Goals it successfully rounds out this section on curriculum development.

Goals are placed in this volume in the last quarter of the book. In this location their meaning has already been developed. They are no mere abstractions. Their interpretation is briefly summarized to crystallize their intent. Richly visioned goals, stated in this wise, are indeed a clue to the values held for youth in a dynamic society. One wishes that these goals so thoughtfully balanced as they are between personal and group values, might etch a little more clearly the goal of fostering individual creativeness. The authors have spent much labor in behalf of youthful creativity throughout the volume. In the opinion of this reviewer respect for the unique and personal in creative education needs the further impetus of being clearly expressed in such a clear cut statement of goals as the authors have given.

Throughout this book, the inference is obvious that the teacher, if successful, is a growing person. Carrying on such activities he must indeed, be a dynamic and a creative individual. One wishes, therefore, that the teacher's role in effecting many of the products presented could be credited a little more directly to effective teaching. "The children decided—the class voted—a pupil read to the class—a fifth grader wrote—" of course they *did* but any teacher knows these things don't *just happen*. The admirably diverse products presented in this splendid volume are not the result

of spontaneous combustion! Teachers say and do and decide and think; they direct and question and correct and show preferences and enthusiasm; they provide materials of all sorts; they ask children to try some things and not to try others; they read and write and certainly they listen. In the present crisis of destructive criticism of instruction, it seems to this reviewer that teacher leadership in the classroom needs full recognition, the more so when it is unobtrusive and artistic and concerned with individual choices and attitudes!

But those few infinitesimal flaws serve only to highlight the excellence of the authors' design and its execution in this memorable volume. Its role in forwarding the development of productive language instruction can easily be predicted. Its attractive appearance, both within and without are in accord with the merit of its text. Its future should be long and honorable.

That a production committee of ten busy persons, already distinguished as authors and teachers, and scattered across the nation could so effectively fuse their ideas and their stores of illustrative material into a unified design is vivid testimony to the philosophy of language they profess. That this could be done in a style so warm and arresting is all the more remarkable. If laurel wreaths were awarded for distinguished service by teachers to other teachers then one should surely be emblazoned upon successive printings of this mature study.

Motivation for Creative Writing

Writing is a skill which has the appearance of simplicity, but which actually involves a complicated interplay of one's powers of observation, interpretation, and facility of language sufficient to express oneself accurately. Children are among the most gifted and penetrating writers because of their lack of preconceived ideas and prejudices which often prevent adults from striking the truth of a matter. But how do we make children want to write and express themselves—make them feel they have something to say? How do we help them to appreciate the beauty of a word picture, or a paragraph which lives and makes the readers see?

First it is necessary to help children identify themselves with writing—to think of themselves as writers, reporters, and poets. Often reading them poetry and writing by other children of their age will accomplish this. The fact that the material is written by their contemporaries makes writing seem less foreign, and presents a challenge to them. Often we talked about such selections in our class. We analyzed them. Why was so and so's poem good? Their answers outlined some of the qualities of good writing we were looking for: "The words he used . . . we could just see things . . . it was interesting."

The children will not always wish to write after listening to and discussing the work of other children; however, some may accept the challenge and express themselves at the moment. Naturally, it is best to take advantage of those times when

the children are in a receptive mood. Thus it follows that you cannot plan ahead or set a special time aside for creative writing. Putting their thoughts down on paper should be an exciting, spontaneous thing.

Another factor to take into consideration, however, and one whose importance is often overlooked, is the teacher's own enthusiasm or inspiration at the moment. If a teacher will take advantage of the moment when *she* is inspired about something, often she can transmit to the children her own enthusiasm. Therefore, one of the most important motivations for writing is the teacher, herself. She must always be looking for opportunities to broaden the scope of her knowledge and experience. She must be sensitive to, and interested in the world around her, and uninhibited enough to transmit her sincere feelings—to establish an empathic response with her class, which will in turn set the fires of creation in their minds. She must have the intense feeling herself about things, or she cannot transmit an awe and reverence for life, beauty, love, and living; curiosity about the depths of the earth, the infinite expanse of the sky, the riches of the ocean—in short, she cannot transmit to the children that which she does not already have herself.

To stimulate the children to want to write, it is necessary to create an atmosphere in which their minds can wander freely to settle down and dwell on any Mr. Hall was a supervising teacher in the Buffalo State Teachers College at the time the children carried on these activities.

topic of their choice; an atmosphere in which they can project themselves beyond the classroom and fulfill their aspirations and wildest dreams. Get the children to relax, to take the blinders off. Stimulate them to think about the mystery of life, growth, time, and change—things they see, feel, and hear from day to day—things they take for granted.

Always take time to "stand and stare"—to capitalize on the moment, the kind of day it is. Do they notice the rain and snowy, dark clouds? Raise the curtains high—let them listen and observe—let them write what the inner voice dictates, freely and easily—then writing is effortless. Some may still write nothing at all, but others may respond to the beauty of the moment as did several in our class one afternoon as we watched in silence the snow falling in majestic flurries of loveliness:

The snow comes drifting down
Through the valleys and over the hills,
Over the roof tops, and lands on the ground—
So tired, so tired.
It sleeps all winter in our town—
So tired, so tired.
The snow is softly coming down
Covering all the pretty flowers in our town.
Making a blanket of soft, white snow,
That's why we see the ground aglow.
Soft flakes from heaven above
Bringing little messages of love.

Are they aware of the various sounds they hear during the day—what are they, and why are they? Help them to think of sounds as music—nature's music and man's music; to appreciate the entire earth with all its living and moving things which make music—the music of life. Sometimes, it may be helpful to read an appropriate selection from literature. One particularly beautiful afternoon, in addition to our own

discussion, I read Edna St. Vincent Millay's *Afternoon on a Hill*. The sheer loveliness of her verse on such an afternoon captured their imagination, and was a vivid experience for all of us.

Soon they will begin to *see* and *bear*:

"As I walked along the road, I could feel the warm sunbeam on my shoulder. The grass was trying to sprout, and the river seemed anxious to move. I doubt if I will ever forget this wonderful, wonderful day."

Flowers, flowers, I love flowers
Flowers everywhere.
Flowers in the garden,
Flowers in the room,
Flowers in my hair.

"The birds are singing in the trees. I see a mother robin tending her young. I see a dog chasing a robin, but the robin gets away. I can smell the newborn Spring. The grass is soft. It makes me want to walk on forever."

"I looked over to one side, and saw a calm, trickling, little brook flowing through the warm earth. As I walked on, I felt the gentle wind blowing through my hair."

"Man's music is machines and factories that make all the things we need. I love it because it makes me feel I'm with somebody. When I hear the sounds of birds and the rippling of water, I feel alone and scared."

And our embryo Carl Sandburg:

It was a beautiful morning in April
The sun was beating down through almost bare branches.
As I approached the corner of Main and Second
I could smell the smoke of the city.

Talking about people and their individual differences is another means of motivation—why we do the things we do; why our moods change; how success and failure affect us. Help the children to understand themselves—they want to. Help them and they will. Here is the response of one group of children on their mixed-up behavior:

"We are jealous . . . we have no friends . . . we want to feel big inside . . . we want to have fun . . . we don't have enough good things to do . . . we don't think . . . we are afraid . . . we are lonely."

"When I am successful, it makes me feel wonderful. I try my best not to brag. But when I am a failure, I try my best not to cry. If I can never cry or brag too much, I'll have some fun in life. Sometimes I stop to think that tomorrow can be too late if I fail. I'll have to be successful today."

Whenever possible, it's good to use and have fun with their writing. Our class took special delight in presenting a program similar to John Cameron Swayze's television show. They wrote everything from commercials to comments in the world of fashion and had a great deal of fun as well as gaining poise from the oral experience.

Sometimes, we made a game of constructive criticism. I would read some of their writing, and ask the class to guess who the "author" was. Of course the author's stock rose. He was delighted—he was identified—he had something to live up to.

As time goes on, certain youngsters will turn out exceptionally good work, and it is natural so. They will have identified themselves with writing, and will become the class poets, story writers, newspaper

editors and reporters. The class will look forward to hearing what these people have written.

The rewards of creative writing are numerous and valuable and reach into many fields. Vocabulary development is increased, and the children gain greater poise from reading their work. Discussion develops their ability to reason and interpret, to examine their own thoughts and feelings, and to observe and record accurately. Even those children who may never learn to express themselves very well will develop a greater appreciation for their world.

Writing will be difficult for children if we think of it as an isolated exercise. If, however, it is treated as a means of capturing an emotion or experience, rather than an end in itself, it will become easy and delightful. The teacher must let each child know, through her encouragement and sincere interest in what he has to say, that he is creating a thing of beauty. Then he will look deep into the wonder of life, and show insight and understanding far beyond his years. Longfellow has said it: "A boy's will is the wind's will, and the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

HARVEY OVERTON

Recreating the Past for Pupils

How to make the past live for children . . . how to help them understand and appreciate the history of our community as the story of real people . . . how to help them see these figures of the past in their human dimensions of humor and courage and sorrow and love and fear and faith—

these were the problems we faced as we set out to write the history of Battle Creek for our third grade pupils.

We did not want merely to relate the

Mr. Overton is chairman of the English Department of the Battle Creek (Michigan) Senior High School.

facts of our community's growth. We want to tell its story with warmth and color and compassion. We wanted to tell its story in such a way that our third graders could identify with the figures out of our past and sympathize with them.

Last spring a group of our elementary school teachers began work on a community history for third grade pupils. They asked me to take the historical accounts that they had uncovered and create stories from them.

From the beginning my task was greatly simplified. The teachers had examined accounts of local history exhaustively and found incidents that had dramatic possibilities, incidents that had in themselves the makings of good stories. Any local history is rife with them. For instance, a newspaper account was found which told of an early circus which came to Battle Creek. The circus paraded through town. As the elephant crossed the bridge over the Battle Creek River, the structure collapsed. The elephant was thrown into the river, buried beneath the timbers of the bridge. The crowd which gathered on the banks wondered how the elephant would get out. He showed them. At first frightened, the beast became angry. He sent the heavy supports and plankings of the bridge sailing through the air and climbed out of the river with no aid. Several years later when the same circus returned to town, this same elephant refused to cross the Main Street bridge until he tested the structure with his foot.

We wanted children to have more than the facts of this incident. We wanted them to understand what a circus meant to boys and girls their own age back in 1850 — the excitement, the anticipation,

the wonderment. The color of the original circus parade needed to be re-created along with characters in whom they could see themselves.

Another incident will illustrate the method used. Erastus Hussey, a Quaker, came to Battle Creek in 1838 and joined other Quakers who operated an Underground Railroad line from the Ohio River. Over a thousand slaves passed through his station in our village. Once, when he heard that men from the South were coming to capture run-away slaves, he sent out a hand bill warning them not to come to Battle Creek. One newspaper account states that men stood guard in the streets of the town the night the plantation owners were expected. However, the Southerners did not come to Battle Creek, and no slaves were ever retaken from Mr. Hussey's station.

But how did it feel to be a slave, to run away, to hide and be hunted, to face fear and a future of uncertainty? And how could this be told in terms comprehensible to third grade pupils? The story which follows illustrates the attempt to develop these insights.

Canada was freedom

"Why must we hide?" Idella asked her mother.

"Hush, child," her mother said. "I have told you before."

"But I want to hear again," Idella insisted.

"We must hide from our master," her mother said. "If he finds us, he will take us back to the plantation."

The plantation—Idella's thoughts wandered back to the plantation. She thought of the white fields of cotton. She thought of the children she played games with. She thought of the huge white house of the master, and of all the beautiful ladies who came there for parties. Idella had lived on the plantation all of her life. Now she

could not quite understand why they were running away from it.

They had been running away from the plantation for many days. At first they had to travel alone. They walked at night and slept in woods by day. But after they crossed the Ohio River, they met many friends. These friends ran Underground Railroad stations. Then there were many days of long dark silences in the cellars of their friends' homes. At night their friends would take them a little farther north to the next station. Now they were hiding in the cellar of an empty house near Climax in Michigan.

"Why must we run away?" Idella asked her mother.

"Because we want to be free," her mother said.

But Idella shook her head to show that she did not understand.

"Do you want to see your father?" her mother asked.

"Oh yes!" Idella cried.

"Then we run away because we want to see Father," her mother said sharply.

Idella did understand this. Her father had run away from the plantation two years ago. He had gone to Canada. Then, in the spring, a stranger had come to talk to Idella's mother. A short time afterwards, they ran away. Now they were going to see Father. Father who held her high on his shoulder. Father who swung her through the air in his strong arms. Father who sang soft songs in her ear at night.

Idella and her mother had sat in the cool damp cellar all day long. Suddenly they heard a knocking at the cellar door. Idella's mother went to the door very quietly. She waited. The knocking came again.

"What do you want?" she whispered.

"You must come with me," a man's voice whispered back. "I am Mr. Hussey."

That was right. Mr. Hussey was the man who was to take them to the next station at Battle Creek. But Idella's mother still did not open the door.

"Why do you come now?" she said. "It is not yet dark."

"I have heard that your master is coming after you. You must come now or he will catch you and take you back to the plantation," Mr. Hussey told her.

Idella's mother quickly opened the door. "We are ready to go," she said.

Mr. Hussey hid them in his wagon under a large blanket. He took them to his store on Michigan Avenue. Then he led them to a small, dark room at the back of the store. There, by candle light, they ate the warm supper which Mrs. Hussey had prepared for them.

As she ate, Idella heard voices in the next room. She listened carefully in the quiet of the candle light.

"Something must be done right away, Mr. Willis," she heard Mr. Hussey say.

"I have heard that over thirty men from the South have been sent to capture the slaves at our stations," Mr. Willis said. "They are all carrying guns!"

"They won't touch a single slave at my station!" Mr. Hussey shouted. "All of us are God's children. The masters have no right to make slaves go back to the plantations!"

"But what can we do now?" Mr. Willis said. "The men from the South may come to our village this very night."

"Go, gather all the men who want to help us!" Mr. Hussey shouted. "We will stand guard in the streets of Battle Creek tonight! I will write a letter. I will warn the men from the South not to come to our village!"

Idella looked into the eyes of her mother. She could see that her mother was frightened, and she started to cry.

"Do not cry," her mother told her. "Mr. Hussey will not let the master take us back to the plantation."

Now Idella began to know why they were running away. If the master caught them, they would never again see Father!

Then the door opened and Mr. Hussey came to them. He saw that Idella was crying, and he patted her head softly.

"Do not cry, little one," he said. "I will let your master take you."

Then he turned to Idella's mother and said, "The wagon is ready. I will take you to the next station at Marshall."

Outside it was dark now, and the stars were out. Idella could pick out the Northern Star, because they had traveled toward it ever since they had left the plantation.

"What is Canada?" she asked as the

wagon rolled on toward Marshall.

"Canada is a country," her mother said.

"But what will it be like?" Idella insisted.

"It will be cool and green and happy there," her mother replied softly.

And Idella smiled to herself. For now they were getting closer to Canada. And Canada was freedom. But most of all, Canada was Father, and Father was fun!

* * * * *

The method, of course, becomes obvious. It is merely that of historical fiction. First the authentic data is gathered. Then the writer spins around it a web of plot and characterization and local color.

Another story further illustrates the method used. Early accounts show that Battle Creek was an important stagecoach stop. Stages would arrive in great numbers at the Battle Creek House, an early tavern. The Patterson and Ward line ran a coach to Hastings and from there to Grand Rapids. Bill Burroughs was the regular driver on this line. The Hastings coach left Battle Creek at 3:00 a.m. and arrived at Hastings at 10:00 the same morning. Reports tell of Indians peering from behind bushes to watch the stage pass by. They were friendly. Nonetheless, they frightened the greenhorn travelers. The stage stopped for a change of horses at Bristol's Tavern and at Macomber Hill to water the horses. One account tells of a passenger who threatened to whip Bill Burroughs because the ride was so rough.

These details, then, plus others of local color, form the basis for the following story.

Stagecoach days

"Crack! Crack!" The long whip lashed in snake-like curls above the horses' heads. When the stage driver jerked it, the buckskin "cracker" at the tip snapped. The

driver sat like a king high in the seat of the stagecoach. He waved the long whip once more, and the proud prancing horses came to a halt in front of the Battle Creek House. Four weary travelers tumbled out of the coach and rushed into the tavern. They wanted to be sure to get rooms for the night.

Then, in clouds of dust, two more stages arrived. As the passengers got out, several busy hands unhitched the horses. They led them off to be fed and watered at the barn on Jackson Street.

Before long three more stages arrived. Again the dust flew. Then it settled in golden speckles as it caught the rays of the late afternoon sun.

A man wearing a tall hat got out of the last stage. "Oh, my back is broken!" he groaned.

"You'd better get some rest tonight," the stage driver told him. "The stage for Hastings leaves at three o'clock tomorrow morning."

Three o'clock in the morning! That was long before the sun came up or the birds began to sing. It was certainly early enough. At least Sandra Morgan thought ever now.

"I'll not put up with this any longer!" cried the black-bearded man. Then he stuck his head out of the window. "Hey, you, driver!" he shouted. "If you don't keep this coach from bumping, I'll get out and whip your hide!"

"I'll thank you to remember who has the whip in his hand, Mister!" Bill Burroughs called back. "If there's any whipping to be done, I'll be the one to do it!" Then he cracked the long whip right at the tip of the man's black beard. And the head went back in to the stage faster than a turtle's.

"Ho, ho ho," laughed Bill Burroughs. "These tender-feet from the East are pretty soft." Then he turned to Sandra. "Do you think you could hold the reins while we water the horses?" he asked her.

"Oh, yes!" Sandra cried. "Father always lets me hold the reins at home."

"Next stop Macomber Hill," Bill Burroughs called.

Suddenly there was a loud thump. The coach tipped sharply to one side. "Hold on-

to your hats!" Bill Burroughs called.

"What's happened now?" growled the man with the black beard.

"One of the leather thorough-braces has snapped," said Mr. Morgan.

"Oh, dear," whined the man with the tall hat. "Now we'll be late and I'll miss my stage."

"Golly," cried Sandra, "I'm sliding out of my seat!"

"Whoa!" Bill Burroughs reined the horses to a stop. "Here we are at Mac-Omber Hill," he shouted. "While the horses drink, you men can help me fix the stage."

"I won't dirty my hands on this stage," said the black-bearded man.

"Those who don't work don't ride," Bill told him. Then he cracked the long whip hard.

The men took a log rail from a nearby fence and lashed it in place beneath the coach.

"If you thought this coach rode hard before, now wait until you try it!" Bill told the black-bearded man.

Then they were off, up the long hill and down through the rolling fields. "Just five miles to Hastings," Bill Burroughs said to Sandra. Then he looked at his watch. "That fellow in the tall hat thinks we'll be late," he laughed. "But this stage won't be late, or I'm a liar!"

Then the whip cracked and the horses galloped. They galloped away the miles so fast that there was little chance of Bill Burroughs' being a liar!

* * * * *

Some stories are more general in treatment. We wanted children to realize that, though our early pioneers worked hard, they also found good fun in their work and faced the hardships of the frontier positively. The following story is based on accounts of the pioneer working bees around Battle Creek.

Swing your partner

Suddenly the latch string was jerked up, and the door to the Johnson cabin flew open. Sally Johnson, Mr. Johnson, and Mrs. Johnson all turned on their stools beside

the fireplace. By the light of the fire they saw a fur-capped head peering in at them out of the darkness.

"A corn husking bee at my house next Saturday," the fur-capped head called.

"Come in beside the fire and rest your bones, Frank Thomas," Mr. Johnson said to the face in the dark.

"Thank you just the same, but I've twenty miles to walk tonight," Frank Thomas replied.

"God speed and we'll be there," Mr. Johnson said cheerfully.

"Be sure to bring the women folk," Frank Thomas said. "My wife is having a quilting bee, and Cal Halliday will be there with his fiddle."

Then the door slammed.

A husking bee, a quilting bee, and a square dance all in one day. That would certainly be fun!

"Will my new dress be ready?" Sally cried.

"It's all set but the sewing, my dear," Mrs. Johnson said.

All set but the sewing—the sewing was the easiest part! A homespun dress takes lots of work. Mr. Johnson had sheared the so. Her father thought so too. He sent her to bed at seven o'clock, for he was taking her with him on the Hastings stage in the morning.

All night long Sandra dreamed of rocking stages and galloping horses. Her dream was broken just long enough to eat a hasty breakfast and hurry down to the Battle Creek House. Then she was sitting in the stage beside her father, sound asleep again. She did not hear the stage hands load the hair-covered trunks into the "foot", or baggage carrier, behind the stage. She did not hear Bill Burroughs, the driver, crack his whip above the horses. She did not hear the large crowd at the tavern cry good-bye to the passengers. For she was once more dreaming of rocking stages and galloping horses.

As the stage bounced and jolted across the plank road past Bedford, Sandra slowly began to awaken. And the rocking stage in her dream seemed to be the same as the rocking stage in which she was actually riding. Then the dream stage disappeared, and she cried, "Father, we are on our way

to Hastings!"

Mr. Morgan could hardly keep from laughing. But he only smiled and said, "Little Miss, you have been sleeping. I should say that you were hardly awake in the first place."

Now Sandra was wide awake. The man with the tall hat sat across from her on the opposite seat. He tipped his hat and said, "Good morning."

"Have you seen any Indians yet?" Sandra cried.

"Oh, dear, are there Indians in this part of the country?" asked the man in the tall hat.

"Oh, yes," laughed Mr. Morgan. "If you watch out the window, you can see them every now and then peering through the bushes."

"No thank you!" said the man in the tall hat. "How do I know that they won't shoot an arrow at me?"

"Oh, they are friendly enough," said Mr. Morgan.

"Too-OO-OO-t!" Bill Burroughs blew a long blast from his horn.

"We are almost to Bristol's tavern," said Mr. Morgan. "The horn will let them know we're coming."

"Will we change horses?" Sandra asked.

"Indeed we will. We'll need fresh ones for the second half of the trip," her father replied.

"I hope they hurry," said the man with the tall hat. "I have to catch another stage at Hastings."

"They will have the horses changed before the stage stops rocking," Mr. Morgan laughed.

"May I ride in the driver's box with Mr. Burroughs?" Sandra asked.

"We'll have to see what Bill Burroughs has to say to that," her father told her.

Bill Burroughs said yes to it. At Bristol's tavern he helped Sandra into the driver's box. "Brace your legs against the foot board," he told her. "Then you won't fall out."

While one man hitched up the four fresh horses, another led the four frothing ones away to rest. Then a large man with a thick black beard hurried out of the tavern. "Can you get me to Hastings by ten o'clock?" he called to Bill Burroughs.

"This stage is never late!" Bill Burroughs called back.

Then the black-bearded man climbed into the coach, and Bill climbed up into the box beside Sandra.

"Now, young lady," Bill said, "watch the horses fly!"

And fly they did, with the long lashing whip cracking above their heads. Over the gentle hills and through the cool green valleys they raced.

Inside the coach the man with the black beard grumbled to himself. "This is the bumpiest stage I've ever been on," he grumbled.

"This stage is called a *thorough-brace*," Mr. Morgan told him. "The coach is held up by leather straps. It may be bumpy but it gets you there."

"Huh," said the black-bearded man. "I like the *Concord* type better. It has real springs."

"Well, at least you'll have the *Concord* type out of Hastings," Mr. Morgan replied.

"Hold on to your seat!" Bill Burroughs shouted to Sandra. "Here we go down a long hill."

The stage rocked and jolted harder than wool from the sheep. Mrs. Johnson had washed it with home-made soap. Then she had brushed it with the carding combs until it lay in long straight strands. Next the strands were spun into yarn on the spinning wheel. Afterwards the yarn was dyed with indigo, a blue powder. Finally the yarn was woven into cloth on a weaving machine called the loom.

Yes, the dress was all set but the sewing. And Saturday would come soon. So Sally and her mother spent every spare second working busily on the dress. Then Saturday was there.

"These oxen are anxious to get going," Mr. Johnson called to Sally and her mother as he sat waiting for them in the wagon.

When Sally stepped out of the cabin doorway, she was wearing her splendid new dress. Her father looked very closely at her. He scratched his chin and began to smile. "I do declare," he chuckled, "that wool looks better on you, little miss, than it did on the sheep."

"I should hope to say so," Mrs. Johnson said. "After all the hours I spent card-

ing and dyeing and spinning and weaving it!"

"Well," Mr. Johnson winked at Sally, "the sheep spent all year growing it."

The plodding oxen pulled the heavy wagon through the woods. Now they were on their way to the husking bee, the quilting bee, and the square dance!

The woods were brown and crisp. An Indian summer sun sent its warm rays down from the brilliant blue sky. And a sweet, dry smell rose from the earth. Now and then a drowsy bee humbled above the brown bushes.

The oxen went slowly, but it did not seem long before they pulled up in front of the Thomas cabin.

"You're just in time," Frank Thomas called. "We have saved all the work for you."

There was certainly plenty of work to do. But the pioneers did not think of it as work. They liked to help each other out. And they had great fun doing it.

"May I help husk the corn?" Sally cried.

"Husking corn is for the menfolk," her father said.

"Besides, we need your nimble fingers to help make the quilt," her mother told her.

And she was right. It took many nimble fingers to make a quilt. When Sally entered the cabin, she saw the quilt stretched out across a large wooden frame. The frame was placed on the backs of four chairs, one at each corner. The women were busy sewing and tying the quilt. Mrs. Thomas handed Sally a needle. Then she handed one to Sally's mother. "Now," she said, "listen to the needles hum!"

Mr. Johnson joined the men in the barn. They had chosen up teams. The teams were racing to see who could husk the most corn. Right in the middle, on a stack of hay, sat Cal Halliday. He was playing his fiddle. As he played, he sang this song:

Fiddle high and fiddle low,
Fiddle through the sun and snow,
Fiddle all day,
Fiddle till morn,
Fiddle the husks right off the corn!

He sang the song once more. This time the men joined him and shouted, "Fiddle the husks right off the corn!"

The barn fairly shook with the swing

of the music and the crackling of the dry corn husks. And the golden mounds of clean hard corn grew taller and taller.

Before long all the work was done. Then the pioneers gathered around a huge steaming table filled with good things to eat—baked potatoes, Johnny cake, roasted rabbit, baked apples, and plum pudding.

After all the dishes were cleared away the pioneers gathered in the cabin to dance.

"Choose your partner!" Cal Halliday called.

Mr. Johnson hurried over to his daughter. He led her to the middle of the floor where they joined three more couples.

"Boy and girl of couple one join hands," Cal Halliday called, and the dance was on.

Sally's new blue dress swished through the air as her father swung her round and round.

Cal Halliday fiddled until there was sweat on his brow. He played all the tunes that the pioneers like. He played the *Zip Coon* and the *Money Musk*.

Then Sally and her father were all alone in the middle of the floor. They were the best dancers at the party.

Cal Halliday played until his fingers were numb. He played all the tunes he knew. Then he had to make up his own. His voice sang out soft and sweet:

Swing your partner as I said before,
Swing your partner across the floor!

Then something strange happened. Mr. Johnson swung Sally around hard. Her hand broke loose from his. And down she went, right through the floor!

The music stopped. All the pioneers rushed to the middle of the floor. During the dance, the trap door over the cellar had come loose. And Sally had fallen right through it!

Mr. Johnson quickly jumped down into the hole. "Are you hurt, my chicken?" he asked anxiously.

But Sally was not hurt. She was only shaken up a bit. When her father lifted her out of the cellar, she cried, "Look, Mother, my new dress is ruined!"

"It is not ruined," her mother said quietly. "It is only covered with dust."

Cal Halliday bent down and patted her on the head. "You're the best dancer I've seen in many a day," he told her. Then he

turned to the other pioneers. "Let's all dance a dance just for Sally!" he shouted.

And everyone agreed that this would be a splendid thing to do. All the pioneers joined hands. Once more the fiddle played, and Cal Halliday made up a song just for Sally as he sang:

Rest a bit and you'll feel fresh,
Then dance the dust right out of that dress!

The owls peering through the windows
of the Thomas cabin saw a gay party that night!

* * * * *

Some observations

A few observations may help others interested in developing similar community histories.

"How can you write stories for children without using vocabulary controls?" I have frequently been asked. Obviously, some control over vocabulary must be exercised. However, I do not believe that it must be the strict control applied to reading instruction books for children. I tried to write in such a way that children could get the meaning of new words from context. Further, I worked on the premise that children like stories. In fact, I believe that they like them so well that they will even stick with a pretty bad one before giving it up. Therefore, I was concerned first with telling a good story within the limitations of the historical material, and second, with telling it in simple terms. I believe that if a story is good, and reasonably within their

range of comprehension, children will read it and enjoy it.

"How many facts of community history should you attempt to bring out in a story?" was another question. I did not want to make a story merely a collection of related facts or a compendium of some historical incident. The particular advantage, I believe, in the story treatment is to enhance historical fact with the human dimension, to re-create the past as it existed to people. Therefore, aside from the historical incident which served as the basis for the story, facts were made subservient to the story, per se. In short, the story should not, I believe, be merely a vehicle to bring facts to children. However, if the story is accurate in detail, it can serve this purpose, too.

Using this method, a total of twenty-three stories were written. They range from stories of the Pottawatomie Indians who used to live around the settlement, of the early pioneers who traveled on the Erie Canal, across Lake Erie, and finally along the old Territorial Road from Detroit to Battle Creek, to series of our early fire fighters and industrialists. We hope that in them our third grade pupils will see the story of real men and women facing danger and hardship and sorrow and finding happiness and good fun and faith in the future. And we hope that from them they will derive an appreciation of the pioneer endeavor in Battle Creek.

Developing Spelling Skills

Spelling has been an integral part of the elementary school curriculum from colonial days. Today it is an important facet of the language arts area. However, the wave of criticism heard today, that our pupils do not know how to spell, causes educators to reevaluate their spelling program.

As teachers, we recognize that the knowledge of child growth, the advance of psychology of learning, and the improvement of teaching techniques and materials, along with better prepared teaching personnel have and do serve to confound this criticism. Besides these strengths, the rise of standardized testing providing measures of comparison, has statistically shown that pupils today spell as well as, if not better than, pupils within the schools of five decades ago. Spelling materials are scientifically chosen, built upon research of reputable word lists secured from children's and adults' writings in and out of school situations. Spelling today is of a more functional nature, pupils learning those words which they will use in their formal writings. Besides this immediate need being fulfilled by the spelling program, the transient and future needs of pupils are also taken into consideration in the modern spelling series.

No teacher can attempt to teach all the words that pupils should know. There are well defined word lists providing a minimum and also maximum word count taking care of the differences of ability. However, the teacher should ever strive to make her pupils independent of her in that

she gives them necessary skills to facilitate their spelling ability. So many times, pupils fail at high school and even college levels, not because they did not have the material presented to them, but because they did not know what to do with it in order to make it their own. They were deficient in study skills and habits of learning, or perhaps they were using study skills which were time consuming and inefficient.

What are some of the skills common to learning spelling in Grades 4, 5, and 6? These grades are chosen because at these levels pupils meet many words from the content areas, especially history, geography, and science. To make the pupil as independent of the teacher as possible should be the goal in teaching spelling.

Three basic skills are presented, the mastery of which will make for better spelling performance. The skill which ranks first is LISTENING. Within the past decade research has provided many data signifying the rise of interest in this area. Reading, particularly, serves to develop the skill of listening. In spelling, too, this skill plays a very definite part in helping pupils become independent spellers. Providing the correct pronunciation of the word, having the pupil listen carefully, giving the meaning of the word in context, are ways in which the pupil can strive for spelling mastery. It must be remembered that it is not merely imitation, but understanding the use of the word that is the main objective.

How many teachers have had difficulty

Sister Josephina is a teacher in Boston College.

with the spelling of *February* mainly because pupils pronounce it *Feburary*? Listening carefully to the correct pronunciation can help. It is recognized that passive listening will not guarantee correct spelling. Listening, plus imitation, plus the meaningful use of the word by the pupil will help to achieve this goal.

In every spelling lesson listening is a skill to be developed. Pupils can be trained to look for the beginning, the middle, and the ending sound within a word. Providing training to note likenesses and differences within a word will foster the skill of listening. Many modern spelling series present exercises emphasizing the listening skill. A humorous incident comes to mind. Teaching the word *flutter* the writer told her class that it belonged to the same family sound as did the word *butter*. In spelling the word many pupils wrote *flbutter*. The meaning of the word *flutter* was not clear to these pupils.

Concomitant with listening is the skill of *looking*. Today pupils live in a world of looking with the presence of television in practically every home. However, it is not surface looking that we are to accept. The pupil must obtain a correct visual representation of the word. He will look at the word as a whole and then in parts. He will note its configuration, its structural composition, and letter sequence. These skills, part of the larger skill of *looking* will serve to complement one another. Frequently, pupils who are classified as poor spellers are they who only look at a fragment of the word. The auditory picture of the word will be supplemented by the visual presentation, both based upon a meaningful context.

With the correct stimuli, concentration

on parts of the word which may prove difficult will serve to give pupils an aid for correct spelling. Skill in anticipating word difficulty by associating word sound with the letter names can help. Due to the unphonetic structure of our language this sound approach cannot be wholly used.

The third skill is the ability to *evaluate* one's word. Of all skills this has a definite transfer. Binet so aptly stated that the power of auto-criticism is the ear mark of the intelligent person. Of all the segments of the elementary school curriculum, spelling can help to develop this skill. Evaluation in terms of legibility and accuracy should characterize the spelling work. Requiring discipline on the part of the pupil, this skill is an excellent means of character training. Even from the earliest grade this skill can be fostered, creating within the pupil a personal pride in his written performance. Norms, or evaluative criteria, can be set up, whereby the pupil may judge the worthwhileness of his achievement. It must be taken into consideration that all pupils will not reach the set goal. Teachers with a knowledge of the differences within classes will make this evaluation fit the needs of the group. These norms placed in a conspicuous place can be part of every lesson. A class motto as "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well," can be placed on the board and serve as means of motivation for the group.

In evaluating work in spelling in the content areas, pupils should have access to the correct spelling of words which may be characterized under the transient needs of spelling. He should not be penalized for misspelling unless the spelling has been a part of the formal teaching of spelling for that grade.

The three basic skills presented are *listening, looking, and evaluating*. As early as Grade 4 pupils can understand and use these skills. Using them and transferring them to other curriculum areas are the optimum goals. Placing the skills in a con-

spicuous place in the classroom, will make the pupils conscious of their importance.

To become skill conscious in spelling is one technique that teachers may use to help combat the wave of criticism that pupils today do not know how to spell.

Tired of reading American educational periodicals? Try *The Use of English*, a British quarterly devoted to the teaching of English, directed toward the secondary and college levels. The style is different, the topics are somewhat foreign, but the problems appear to have kinship with ours.

As one reads there is the feeling that something is missing. A discovery! No statistics. The pages are clean, statistically speaking. And few footnotes! An occasional reference or clarification, but Jones, *op. cit.*, Smith, *loc. cit.*, and *Ibid.* seem to be used quite sparingly. It's quite refreshing, the merits of accurate and complete documentation notwithstanding, to read in a scholarly document with such a format.

However, one has the feeling that the British, too, have their pedagogy, which in time would create a reaction similar to that felt in many quarters in this country today. Witness these two quotations from the summer, 1953 number. From "Composition Work in a Modern School," by David Holbrook:

My own aims, in stimulating children's imaginative composition, and in discussing them with the children, were as follows, and I will offer in a later article what I consider to be satisfactory results. First, to encourage the expression of feeling, in an atmosphere in which such expression was regarded as seriously as the expression of facts—about 'the watersheds of the world, whatever they are'. I wanted to

make the child explore his own feelings, whether he realised he was doing so or not, and to have between him and me—in a public world, outside ourselves—a statement of them, revealing, maybe, the kind of psychological traits Sir Herbert Read might be interested in. As soon as I had some clue thereby to his emotional growth and needs I could help to develop his technique in relation to them.

And, from "Counterfeit Poetry and the Adolescent," by James Reeves:

The argument is sometimes heard: I used to love such-and-such a poem as a child; of course I've grown out of it now, but it didn't do me any harm. Too often the adult who has grown out of his school poems has grown out of all poetry; and the present state of poetic taste—the unprecedented general lack of interest in the whole subject—may be due partly to wrong teaching. There is no good evidence that the poetic teaching of twenty or thirty years ago has produced anything other than a reaction against all poetry in later years. In other cases the speaker is a sophisticated reader who can appreciate the memory of *Barbara Frietchie* while still preferring Hopkins. But he is a rare exception.

We invite our readers to read *The Use of English* and make their own judgment. The magazine is carefully edited and the articles are thoughtfully written. Address inquiries for copies or subscriptions to *The Use of English*, 40 William IV Street, London, W. C. 2.

Developmental Interrelationships among Language Variables in Children of the First Grade

Despite the vast amount of research that has been done in the field of reading, relatively little attention has been given in the first grade to the interrelationships among reading and the other facets of language. Lack of research concerning language interrelationships, or the lack of the application of available research data, can be observed particularly in the programs which have been designed for first grade children. Primarily, six-year-old children go to school to learn to read and write and programs are designed to induct them into this phase of the culture—painlessly for some, painfully for others.

Studies of the language development of young children have pointed out that linguistic development follows a sequential pattern; namely, listening with understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. Observation of teaching procedures in first grade reveals that often reading is given a primary emphasis and less attention is given to the status of children in other areas of language. Also, there is the question as to whether all children follow the fairly well-accepted idea of sequence in language development. Are there individual patterns of development? Are there children who learn to read well and, at the same time, have difficulty with oral language and vice versa? Should reading and writing be taught concurrently in the first grade? Are ideas expressed better by some children through the non-verbal language of painting? Do first grade children use writing as a means of expression? These, and other related questions concerning the language development of first grade children formed the basis of a

study to investigate the interrelationships among language variables.

The Problem

In order to try to ferret out some of the significant factors in the language development of first grade children and, if possible, to discover some of the interrelationships among these factors, an effort was made to answer the following questions:

1. How is oral language related to success in reading? Is it possible to evaluate a first grade child's status in oral language and determine his readiness for reading?
2. Are the motor abilities of children factors in determining their status in oral language, reading, writing and spelling?
3. Do the drawings of children reveal factors that are important in evaluating status in oral language, reading, writing, and spelling?
4. Are there developmental interrelationships among all of these factors—oral language, reading, drawings, writing and spelling?

The children tested

Two hundred and forty first-grade children from three elementary schools in Austin, Texas were chosen for the study. The children in the three schools came from comparable socio-economic backgrounds. The study was planned to be done in three parts. Measures were to be taken at the end of the first year in school, the second year, and the fifth year. Eight teachers

Miss Martin is Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Texas.

cooperated in the study during the first two years. At the end of the fifth year, the children were scattered in many schools and were studied individually by an investigator. The first year phase of the study, which will be reported in this article, concerns one hundred children for whom all data were available at the end of the second grade.

Measures obtained

Seven types of instruments were used in measuring the language factors. The oral language of each child was recorded as she or he participated in an informal sharing period, commonly known as "Show and Tell." These individual recordings were made with a wire recorder at the beginning and at the end of the first grade. Three types of evaluations of language status were made from the recordings: the total number of words that were used by each child; the number of different words used; and the average length of sentences.

Development in fine motor skills was determined by samples of the children's own names which they had written from memory. The quality of writing—which consisted almost entirely of copying, was evaluated by the Metropolitan Primary Handwriting Scale. This test, too, gave clues to readiness for handwriting. This test was given to determine the development of fine motor coordination in each child, as a clue to readiness for handwriting.

Vision and hearing were screened to eliminate those children who were handicapped in these areas. The instruments used for the screening were the Massachusetts Vision Test and a group Audiometer.

Five of the six parts of the Metropolitan Readiness Test were used for measuring readiness for reading at the beginning of the first grade. Those parts of the Readiness test that dealt with number concepts were eliminated. The reading section of the Metropolitan Achievement Test, Primary I Battery, Form S, were used to measure reading achievement at

the end of the first grade.

Observation had shown that drawing and painting are the best media of communication for some children. Therefore, drawings of the human figure were rated by the Goodepough Scale and other paintings were studied for evidence of conceptual growth and motor control.

Treatment of data

The data that were obtained at the end of the first grade were treated in the following manner: (a) coefficients of correlation among all factors which were measured at the beginning of the first grade were computed; (b) correlations were computed among these same factors at the end of the first grade; (c) and correlations were made between the factors at the beginning of the first grade and the growth increments between the measures of factors at the beginning and end of the first grade; (d) the analysis of all data for case studies for fourteen selected children.

Interrelationships among language variables at the beginning and end of the first grade

The interrelationships among the language variables may be found in Tables I and II. The relationship of the oral language which was used informally by children to reading readiness at the beginning and reading achievement at the end of the first grade was virtually negligible. Only one oral language measure (the number of different words used) showed a low, positive relationship. The relationship of oral language to the reading of first grade children which exists when the teacher uses their actual language in making reading materials was not explored in this study. The relationship which might have been revealed had all the words which were incorporated in the readiness and reading achievement tests been a part of the meaning and speaking vocabularies of the children remains in the realm of speculation or conjecture. The fact that a number of different words which the children used in speaking

TABLE I
INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG MEASURES OF THE LANGUAGE
DEVELOPMENT OF FIRST GRADE CHILDREN AT THE BEGINNING
OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

	<i>Variables</i>								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean	S. D.
1		.2210	.3886	.0678	.0639	.2117	.1365	66.25	9.2978
2			.2933	.0985	.0692	.0863	.2842	12.66	4.8754
3				.2721	.0574	.2958	.7132	29.15	11.5122
4					.2252	.9744	.0346	34.83	31.1090
5						.2998	.0993	8.862	4.3476
6								22.2	16.5378
7								3.22	.9849

Variables:

1. Scores obtained from Metropolitan Readiness Tests.
2. Scores obtained from an evaluation of a drawing of a man by using the Goodenough Scale.
3. Quality scores in writing rated by the Metropolitan Primary Manuscript Handwriting Scale.
4. Total number of words used in an oral language situation.
5. Average length of sentences used in an oral language response.
6. Number of different words used in an oral language response.
7. Scores from a motor test.

TABLE II
INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG MEASURES OF THE
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF FIRST GRADE CHILDREN
AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

	<i>Variables</i>								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean	S. D.
1		.2357	.1663	.1463	.0036	.1789	.1814	310.82	3.8974
2			.3023	.0167	.0415	.0152	.3180	18.74	5.2871
3				.0116	.1021	.018	.6523	48.25	9.0381
4					.2406	.9493	.0119	59.85	58.2622
5						.2801	.0054	9.365	2.8623
6							.0832	36.29	23.4001
7								4.26	.3316

Variables:

1. Scores obtained from Primary Battery I, Form S, Metropolitan Achievement Tests.
2. Scores obtained from an evaluation of a drawing of a man by using the Goodenough Scale.
3. Quality scores in writing rated by the Metropolitan Primary Manuscript Handwriting Scale.
4. Total number of words used in an oral language situation.
5. Average length of sentences used in an oral language response.
6. Number of different words used in an oral language response.
7. Scores from a motor test.

showed a low, positive relationship to the readiness test gives a hint concerning the relationship which was mentioned above. Children seemed to recognize the meanings of words which they used in oral language. If the knowledge of the meanings of words and the ability to use these words in oral language are a part of the reading process, then, it might be well for those who make reading materials for first grade children to try to determine whether the words which are used in such materials have meaning for the particular children who are going to use them. Teachers should probably give as much attention to this aspect of the teaching of reading as to the actual teaching of word forms.

No relationship was found between fine motor skill as measured in this study and reading readiness, reading achievement, and oral language. A substantial relationship existed between fine motor ability and writing. It seems that the implication for teachers to be derived from this relationship is that, despite the fact that learning to read and write has become almost synonymous with beginning the first grade, children can learn to speak and read well without learning to write. This implication was strengthened by the analysis of the case studies of individuals. A second implication can be derived from the substantial relationship which was found between motor skill and writing by copying. The case studies revealed that many children entered school without the motor skill requisite for writing. It is probable that the vast amount of time which is spent in teaching first grade children to write before they have any desire to use this means of expressing ideas could be spent more advantageously in using other materials—crayons, paint, clay, wood—which many children can use successfully. Furthermore, writing could probably be taught in a shorter time and much less painfully when children have matured sufficiently in fine motor skills.

Writing by copying revealed a definite,

small relationship with the readiness test and with two measures of oral language (total length of response and the number of words used) at the beginning of the first grade. At the end of the first grade, there were negligible relationships between writing and reading achievement and all of the measures of oral language. The implications which are stated in the foregoing paragraph seem applicable here, also. In the case studies, two children who were among the oldest chronologically in the group and were among those who made the lowest scores on the readiness test; did successful copying at the end of the first grade, but they were unable to succeed in reading.

The drawings of the children in this study showed no relationship to oral language; however, they were related in a small, definite way to readiness for reading, reading achievement, writing, and fine motor ability. These relationships seem to indicate that children who are unable to express ideas through oral language may be able to express them well in drawing. This assumption was verified in two case studies. The small, definite relationships between drawing and three other variables may indicate that by studying carefully the drawings of children, teachers may find clues to readiness for reading, writing, and spelling.

Interrelationships among the first set of measures and the increase between the first and second sets of measures

These interrelationships may be found in Table III. Few developmental interrelationships were discovered through the correlation of the first set of measures of the language variables with the increase between the first and second sets of measures. There is much evidence which shows that the development of children in all areas is influenced by many factors; hence there is no reason to believe that development in language is not affected by many factors within the child and in the environment in which he

TABLE III
CORRELATION OF THE FIRST SET OF MEASURES AND THE INCREASE
BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND SET OF MEASURES

	Readi- ness	Draw- ing	Writ- ing	Total Length of Re- sponse	Aver. Length of Re- sponse	No. of Differ- ent Words Used	Motor Score	Mean	S. D.
Increase in Drawing	.127		.0612	.025	.029	.0368	.0235	6.04	6.01
Increase in writing	.191	.0858		.1798	.102	.3347	.4772	19.65	11.56
Increase in Total Length of Language Response	.0245	.0638	.0388		.1857	.231	.029	25.17	59.79
Increase in Average Length of Sentences	.010	.227	.0302	.2418		.2945	.0797	0.47	4.86
Increase in No. Different Words Used	.0039	.061	.0532	.4117	.0949		.0272	18.44	27.61
Increase in Motor Score	.16	.16	.5467	.144	.018	.1563		1.07	1.17

lives. With few exceptions the increase in the language variables which were measured in this study was not related to the original scores that children had made in the variables. For example, the original scores on the readiness test were unrelated to the increase in all the language variables. Implications for teachers of first grade children which may be derived from these findings are: A child's ability to write by copying probably has little to do with his progress in the ability to express ideas in oral language or drawing; ability in fine motor skills seems to have no relationship to the increase in using language orally; and that the increase in writing by copying is related to growth in fine muscular skill. Evidence in this study seemed to indicate that at the first grade level, growth in each language variable followed an individual developmental pattern and was unrelated to other variables.

Conclusions from the case studies

The data from the case studies of the fourteen children who were at the extremes of the group of the 100 children in the study revealed the individuality of the unfolding language growth patterns of first grade children. Counterparts of these fourteen selected cases in individual language growth patterns can be found among the remainder of the cases in the study. There was little indication that the first grader who talked well would succeed in reading or that the poor speaker would have difficulty in it. Some children who were able to write well, did poorly in both speaking and reading. Good readers were poor writers! Each child, more-or-less, followed a zigzag pattern of development; consequently, parallel development in the language variables, as set forth in this study, should not be expected.

Councilletter

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATIONS REPORTS

The National Council of Teachers of English, as befits its special character, is a communicator on a massive scale: it holds many meetings, makes many committee reports, issues several journals, and also publishes each year books both large and small. In performing the last-named service the Council addresses all levels of teachers and students and sells many thousands of copies of its publications. In the past the Council's booklists were its most widely sold publications and are still its best sellers. But other publications directed at teachers rather than students have recently been very widely sold.

Most ambitious of all the Council's publishing projects is the Language Arts Series, under Dr. Dora V. Smith's direction. In this series two volumes, *The English Language Arts* and *The Language Arts for Today's Children*, have already appeared. A third, dealing with English in the secondary schools, will appear this year; two others, discussing English on the college level, are in active preparation. In these five volumes the National Council will present its creed, its procedures, and its goals both to teachers and to the public at large. They are volumes which no English teacher should fail to read. He will find in them much that is valuable and stimulating, although naturally he will not agree with everything that is said in them.

In addition, several brochures have appeared in the past year. The new junior-high-school reading-list is ready—*Your Reading*, prepared by a committee of which Dr. Ellen Frogner is chairman. In accordance with the Council's long-standing policy of keeping its reading-lists in constant revision, a new edition of *Books for You*, the senior-high-school reading-list, is now in course of preparation by a committee of which Dwight Burton, of Florida State University, is chairman. He will welcome any suggestions or comments sent to him for the improve-

ment of the present list. Teachers interested in reading techniques and the responses of students will find of much value a Council brochure entitled, *Literature and Social Sensitivity*, by Walter Loban. This explores "the response of adolescents to literature involving values based on the concept of human dignity." From the National Conference on Research in English came two research bulletins this year: *Child Development and the Language Arts* and *Interrelationships among the Language Arts*.

Definitely practical is another publication—the *Handbook for Affiliates*, prepared by a committee of which William D. Herron was chairman and intended to produce closer relationships between the Council and its many and important affiliates.

In preparation are numerous other books and pamphlets—a revision, for example, of Constance Carr's widely read treatment of *Substitutes for the Comics*. Another on *Mass Media* is in preparation; and plans are being made for publication of several groups of articles in the fields of elementary and secondary English.

Many older publications of the Council are still being actively purchased. It may interest members of the Council to know that the one in greatest demand is C. C. Fries's *American English Grammar*. Teachers interested in the purchase of Council publications who have not already received the attractive and useful catalogue, *Tools for Teaching English*, should write for a copy to the Council offices, 704 South Sixth St., Champaign, Ill. This tells about our publications old and new, also describes the widely using recordings which the Council pioneered in making.

How do these publications originate? If you have an idea for a book or a pamphlet, how can you go about the task of preparing it for of Publications and secure his suggestions for

Council sponsorship? Most Council publications originate in the committees of the Council, frequently are based on reports of these committees. Many committees set out with the definite intention of producing a report that will in time take its place among Council publications. By making a report worthy of publication they are enabled to reach many English teachers not on their committee and all of those who could not be present at some Council meeting where the topic of the report was discussed. Occasionally an idea for a publication is presented by an individual but before it can become a definite project of the Council it needs to be formally approved by the Executive Committee.

When a committee feels that its work should crystallize in a publication, its first procedure is to discuss the project with the Director. If several projects are all set for completion at a particular time, it may not be feasible to issue them all at that time; and the attempt is made to spread them out. When the manuscript is completed, the Executive Committee gives the Director of Publications the names of three readers, who are asked to appraise the proposed publication and make useful comments and suggestions. On the basis of their reports, as gathered by the Director of Publications, a recommendation to publish, to postpone, or not to publish is made to the Executive Committee. The careful preparation of our Council publications has won them esteem and circulation in educational and general circles.

Max J. Herzberg

Director of Publications
National Council of Teachers
of English

The following nominations were submitted by the Nominating Committee of the NCTE Elementary Section, Marion Edman, Constance McCullough, and Naomi Chase, Chairman:

I. For the Section Committee

(Three to be elected)

M. VIRGINIA BIGGY, Concord, Massachusetts, Public Schools

JUNE FELDER, Rivera, California, Public Schools

HELEN STOLTE GRAYUM, Seattle Public Schools

GRACE RAWLINGS, Baltimore Public Schools

FRANCES READY, University of Wyoming Laboratory School

ALDEAN WESEBAUM, Department of Elementary Education, Wayne University

II. For the Board of Directors

(Two to be elected)

ALTHEA BEERY, Cincinnati Public Schools

EDNA HORROCKS, Department of Instruction, Cleveland

HELEN HUUS, University of Pennsylvania

MIRIAM WILT, Temple University

Candidates for the Section Committee and for the Board of Directors are elected to serve three-year terms. Additional nominations may be made by petition signed by fifteen members of the Section and filed with the Executive Secretary of the Council, 704 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois. The election will be conducted by mail ballots sent out early in May, and the persons elected will begin their terms next November.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
Quotas to Reach FIFTY BY SIXTY

State	Percent of Total U.S. Population	No. Mems., Subscribers Feb., 1954	1955 Goal	1956 Goal	1957 Goal	1958 Goal	1959 Goal	1960 Goal
Alabama	.0204	325	431	537	650	770	890	1020
Arizona*	.0050	157	171	185	200	216	232	250
Arkansas	.0126	226	287	348	413	482	551	630
California	.0706	1836	2090	2344	2625	2916	3207	3530
Colorado	.0088	219	252	285	320	355	396	440
New Hampshire	.0036	98	110	122	135	149	163	180

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

State	Percent of Total U.S. Population	No. Mem., Subscribers Feb., 1954	1955 Goal	1956 Goal	1957 Goal	1958 Goal	1959 Goal	1960 Goal
Connecticut*	.0134	433	468	503	541	581	621	670
Delaware*	.0021	63	69	75	81	88	95	105
D.C.	.0053	138	157	176	196	218	236	265
Florida	.0185	398	477	556	640	729	818	925
Georgia	.0229	624	712	790	876	969	1052	1145
Idaho	.0039	71	90	109	129	150	170	195
Illinois*	.0581	1779	1948	2117	2297	2487	2677	2905
Indiana*	.0262	838	909	980	1056	1137	1218	1310
Iowa*	.0175	550	599	648	700	755	810	875
Kansas* #	.0127	536	551	566	582	598	615	635
Kentucky	.0196	291	391	492	599	713	827	980
Louisiana	.0179	323	409	495	586	683	780	895
Maine	.0061	92	122	152	184	217	250	305
Maryland	.0156	335	402	469	540	616	692	780
Massachusetts	.0313	661	797	933	1078	1233	1388	1565
Michigan	.0425	1149	1295	1441	1597	1763	1929	2125
Minnesota*	.0199	724	765	806	849	894	939	995
Mississippi	.0145	251	312	383	459	541	623	725
Missouri	.0264	498	621	744	875	1011	1147	1320
Montana	.0039	105	118	131	145	160	175	195
Nebraska	.0088	219	252	285	320	355	396	440
Nevada	.0011	30	34	38	42	46	50	55
New Jersey	.0322	611	761	911	1071	1241	1411	1610
New Mexico	.0045	115	131	147	164	182	200	225
New York	.0989	2230	2637	3044	3478	3940	4402	4945
North Carolina	.0271	552	672	792	921	1058	1195	1355
North Dakota*	.0041	120	133	146	160	174	188	205
Ohio	.0530	1261	1469	1677	1899	2135	2371	2650
Oklahoma	.0149	323	386	449	517	589	661	745
Oregon*	.0101	382	400	418	438	459	480	505
Pennsylvania	.0700	1709	1978	2247	2534	2838	3142	3500
Rhode Island	.0053	68	98	128	159	191	223	265
South Carolina	.0141	200	276	352	433	519	605	705
South Dakota*	.0043	126	132	138	144	150	156	165
Tennessee	.0219	406	509	612	722	839	956	1095
Texas	.0514	1348	1530	1712	1907	2114	2321	2570
Utah* #	.0046	201	205	209	213	217	224	230
Vermont	.0025	46	58	70	83	97	110	125
Virginia	.0221	352	465	578	698	825	952	1105
Washington*	.0157	482	527	572	620	671	723	785
West Virginia	.0134	189	261	333	410	492	574	670
Wisconsin*	.0229	886	925	964	1005	1049	1093	1145
Wyoming	.0019	47	54	61	69	77	85	95

*In states marked with an asterisk, members are urged to set voluntarily higher goals than those suggested. These states are already well above the median proportion of memberships.

#In 1954, if every state had as high a proportion of members and subscribers as Kansas now has, NCTE rolls would already total more than 42,000. If every state had as high a proportion as Utah, the total would be almost 44,000.

The National Council of Teachers of English will sponsor or co-sponsor six workshops during the summer of 1955. Here is the pertinent information concerning four of them.

1. Conference on English as a Second Lan-

guage

Offered by: The University of Puerto Rico under the sponsorship of the National Council of Teachers of English and with the co-operation of the De-

partment of Education of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

Place: University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico

Dates: July 5 to August 12, 1955

Courses: Introduction to Linguistic Science, Phonetics and Phonemics of American English, and Methods and Materials for Teaching English as a Second Language

Credit: 2 semester hours for each course

Cost: Dormitory accommodations, \$125.00 for six weeks; Tuition \$3.00 a credit hour, University of Puerto Rico, and \$3.00 activity fee

Limitation: Enrollment limited to 40 non-resident students

Transportation: Via New York and Miami, via Pan American World Airways and Eastern Airlines; tickets available through the University of Puerto Rico, no federal tax

Address inquiries to: Dr. Oscar Porrata, Dean, College of Education, University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico

2. Cornell University Workshop

Offered by: Cornell University under the co-sponsorship of the New York State English Council and the National Council of Teachers of English

Place: Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

Dates: July 11 to 15, 1955 (Cornell is having a reading conference on July 6, 7, 8, to which the workshop people are also invited.)

Costs: Rooms, \$2.00 per day; meals \$2.50 to \$3.00 per day

Address inquiries to: Miss Veronica V. Brophy, 24 A Reade Street, Port Chester, New York

3. Appalachian Curriculum Workshop

Offered by: Appalachian State Teachers under the sponsorship of the National

Council of Teachers of English

Dates: August 1 to 12, 1955

Place: Boone, North Carolina

Limitations: 35 secondary teachers, 35 elementary teachers

Credit: 3 semester hours

Costs: Registration Fee, \$12.00, tuition, \$9.00 (for graduate credit); Registration, \$7.50, tuition \$7.50 (for undergraduate credit); \$10.00 for one week, \$15.00 for two weeks for those not desiring college credit. Rooms, \$26.00 for two weeks for two persons. Reasonably priced meals in college cafeteria

Address inquiries to: Dr. Mildred A. Dawson, Sacramento State College, Sacramento 19, California (before June 1). Dr. Mildred A. Dawson, Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, North Carolina (after June 1)

4. New York State University Teachers College Conference

Offered by: Plattsburg (N.Y.) State University Teachers College and co-sponsored by the New York State English Council and the National Council of Teachers of English

Place: Plattsburg, New York

Dates: August 8 to 19, 1955

Limitation: Intended for teachers in grades 1 to 6

Credit: University credit will be given for this workshop

Address inquiries to: Dr. Earl Harlan, State University Teachers College, Plattsburg, New York

Information about workshops at the University of Iowa and at Hunter College will appear next month.

* * * * *

"Spelling Report," by Thomas C. Pollock, an eight-page reprint from *College English*, may be obtained from NCTE for twenty-cents. The article consists mainly of a grouped list of the most persistent spelling errors.

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹



William A. Jenkins

Again, the comics

Comic books are beginning to annoy us! They seem to creep into the professional literature far too often, and the discussions are either scathing or pointless. The comics are newsworthy, however, and we shall continue to report developments in the area. At the moment, there are two bits that call for notice. One has brought forth a personal observation; the other, a request for observation and study.

The observation is that critics of comics seem to have mellowed in their recent judgments. No longer are comic books the main source for suggestion and imitation of all types of delinquent behavior. Perhaps the critics' current position stems from a more considered position than that from which they issued their "blasts" in the late forties. Or it might be that now, with the establishment and implementation of the code of the Comic Magazine Association of America, they feel that their cries have been heeded. Whatever the reason, we feel that the critics are not quite so critical.

A case in point is a recent copyrighted newspaper article by Frances L. Ilg and Louise Bates Ames of the Gesell Institute of Child Development. Their position is that "... in the case of reasonably stable children from reasonably good homes and neighborhoods, comic book reading is no more likely than is any other medium, to produce delinquency or emotional upset." Drs. Ilg and Ames say that comic books are "nuisances," and that the time spent on them could be used to better advantage. But they feel that children have a certain amount of time to waste, that the comics obviously give them something they need, and that since the comic-addiction follows such a highly predictable pattern with regard to age, controls on the reading of them should not be too rigid. They

advocate restriction and regulation, but not prohibition.

The Gesell Institute people also seem to indicate that those child specialists who feel that the comic book is one of our greatest menaces are in a minority. The "fuss," they say, has been about "crime or horror" comics. And even on these lurid lithographs they feel that we should not place all the blame; they are bad, but for most children only as a contributing factor.

A second sane approach to the question was made by Hazel Gibbonny and Edgar Dale in *The News Letter* of the Bureau of Educational Research of Ohio State University. Most of the December number asks, "What About the Comics?" Their answer says, qualifiedly, that the comics, and the trivialization of the other mass media, will be controlled through diagnosis and therapy instead of more of the blame and scolding which has been dealt out in the past.

Miss Gibbonny and Mr. Dale took a stand against the negative approach to comics evaluation, or to the evaluation of any of the mass media. A positive, constructive approach and a re-evaluation of the good life to endow it with greater appeal for the many are what is needed, in their thinking. The positive approach includes getting the comic book publishers to exercise their social responsibility; the parents to check their children's reading and what is available for them to read; the librarians to make excellent materials readily available; the dealers not to stock objectionable comics; the teachers to provide better intellectual outlets than those furnished by the comics and to do a better job of teaching critical, discriminating reading.

¹Wisconsin State College, Milwaukee.

Gibbony and Dale are not extremists on the question. They cited four major conclusions which have received substantial agreement from experts: (1) comics will not cause a well-socialized child to commit a crime; (2) they may have an effect on emotionally disturbed children; (3) the more avid a reader of comics the child is, the more likely he is not able to cope with them; and (4) excessive reading of comics is symptomatic of emotional maladjustment.

Our request

Our request has to do with the newly-established code of the Comic Magazine Association of America. Probably this month comics which have been approved by former judge Charles F. Murphy and his staff will reach the distributors. We should like teachers and parents to examine these comics and then forward their judgments, good and bad, to the Association.

An action committee of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers (700 North Rush Street, Chicago 11) has prepared guides for evaluation of this medium (and of TV). The guides are not for the purpose of publishing an approved or disapproved list, but as tools for examination. The committee has said: "... a production or publication should appeal to age levels; have proper proportions of entertainment and action; add to understanding and appreciation of one's self, others and the world; encourage worthwhile ideals, values, and beliefs; and stimulate constructive activities. There should be artistic quality, language suited to subject and age level, all combining to produce an overall positive effect."

The comics cleanup

The Comic Book Association has been at work since its organization four months ago. Code administrator Murphy was reported by the New York Times News Service in January as saying that the drawings and text for 440 issues had been studied; these represented 285 dif-

ferent publications. Rejections by that time totalled 126 stories, and 5,656 individual drawings had been blue-pencilled and replaced with approved drawings.

The female figure has kept the blue pencil busiest, according to the news service. Eliminating ugly facial distortions and removing objectionable advertising has kept the staff busy also. Among advertisements rejected so far have been those listing for sale bull whips and zip guns.

Comics in Germany

American PTA groups in Germany have complained about the type of comics placed on sale, according to the Associated Press. As a result, *Stars and Stripes*, the army newspaper, plans to establish an advisory board of chaplains to review comic books and literature sold on its newsstands. The board will not have executive power to decide what should not be distributed.



Spelling help

Some relief for your spelling problems may be found in Margaret B. Parke's article in the January *Childhood Education*. "Of Course We Teach Spelling!" is the way Miss Parke puts it. Her article effectively outlines just how this teaching can be done. Her position is that children should not just have to learn to spell certain words correctly; they should be taught the method of attacking all words.

In her system, general alphabetical lists have a small place. Lists, yes, but a list of the ten words which constitute one-fourth of the running words written in English; a list of the most frequently encountered words from the children's reading; an "I" list of the individual child's needs for his own writing; and a "we" list that the class compiles. Readiness—nurtured by activities and evidenced by a need to write simply but accurately; systematic approach—good work habits and convenient materials; and attacking at points of error—pronunciation, syllabication, phonics, mnemonic devices,

homonym study—are key points in her approach.

Writing based on individual incentive, games and gadgets (the typewriter!), and an abundance of individual guidance, both for the child with unusual difficulties and for him who spells easily, are among the techniques she advocates. And her spelling program is evaluated quite simply: in the way the children write. The program is successful if children detect and correct their errors with enthusiasm, if they become self-directing in finding their own errors, and if they show an increasing vocabulary.



Foreign language in the grades

To the question "Does Foreign Language Belong in the Elementary School?" Alice Miel answers with a strong "yes" in the December number of *Teachers College Record*. Our changing role in world affairs, the frustrations of the numerous servicemen and technicians, while they were abroad, and the success of experimental programs in schools throughout the country are among the reasons for her answer. She cited a recent study which showed that in 145 communities foreign language is being taught in the elementary school, with good results. The programs vary. In some areas the children are taught comparative language, in others cases that language which has historical or geographical significance, and in still others they have a choice of several languages. Frequency and duration of study vary, and goals are not always clear. Who should study foreign language, the level of proficiency to be sought, adult needs, and the degree to which foreign language study increases empathy for and understanding of other peoples are four problems which cannot yet be met head-on with definitive answers.

Miss Miel cites conflicting psychiatric and neurological opinions as to whether the early years are the most fruitful or the most harmful in which a child might study a language other than that which is native to him.

Foreign languages in grade school also received attention in the December *Michigan Education Journal*. Professor Otto G. Graf, chairman of the University of Michigan's committee on language instruction, is quoted as saying "... it has always been believed that youngsters on an elementary-school level pick up a language more readily than adults because they have no such phobias or other psychological blocks that would hinder their learning easily."

Prof. Graf attributes the growth in elementary school foreign language instruction to the growing popularity of language study in colleges. This is in contrast to Dr. Miel's position, above. She credits the growth to the work of the MLA, through a Rockefeller Foundation financed study, and to the First National Conference on the Role of Foreign Language in America, organized by Earl J. McGrath in 1953.



Summer associateships

Two Visiting Associateships in test development for the summer 1955 are announced by the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey. One is in science and the other is in education. The associateships are for two months, July 5 to September 2, and pay a \$700 stipend plus round-trip travelling expenses.

The associateships are offered "to give interested members of the teaching profession an opportunity to become familiar with test construction procedures, to bring fresh points of view to the work of the Test Development Department, and to give members of the Test Development, and to give members of the Test Development Department staff an opportunity to maintain contact with the problems and current practices in the schools."

The two associates will review tests, prepare questions, suggest ways in which tests can be made more effective, and build specifications for future tests.

Applications, qualification requirements, and other information may be obtained by

writing to Dr. Edith Huddleston, Educational Testing Service, 20 Nassau Street, Princeton, New Jersey.

Old magazines, anyone?

Your old magazines can be put to good use by Magazines for Friendship, Inc. The Magazines for Friendship Plan, now in its fourth year is based on the idea that our better magazines are the most vivid, effective propaganda we have to depict American democracy and to combat communism. The organization hopes that librarians and professors in foreign universities will be supplied regularly with good American magazines. Most foreign university professors have some knowledge of English and will share what they read with others.

For information on which magazines to send, where, and how to send them, write to Magazines for Friendship, Occidental College, Los Angeles 4, Calif.

Six practical resources

Six very practical lists have been published by the Demonstration Laboratory of the University of Illinois Library School.

They are:

Sources of Free and Inexpensive Aids to Learning

Directory of Sources for Filmstrips

Directory of Sources for 16 mm. Sound Films

Sources for Pictures and Charts

Sources of Educational Recordings

Directory of Sources for Recording Tape Materials and Equipment

Write to the University of Illinois Library School, Urbana.

Support for the Schools

"If We Fail the Schools," a pamphlet containing graphs, cartoons, and text showing the necessity of support for public schools, has been published by the CIO Department of Education and Research, 718 Jackson Place,

N.W., Washington 6, D. C. The price is 15 cents.

Free pamphlet

Better Understanding and Use of Maps, Globes and Charts is available upon request from Denoyer-Geppert Company, 5235 Ravenswood Avenue, Chicago 40.

Elementary curriculum overview

The Elementary School Curriculum: an Overview is a recent publication of the Bureau of Elementary Curriculum Development of the New York State Education Department. The excellent volume approaches being a course in elementary education. Programs for each of the six grades and kindergarten are described: what the children are like, content highlights in their curriculum, and a typical day's program for each grade. *Elementary English* readers may find the chapter for their individual grade especially enlightening, in addition to the outstanding concluding section on "Putting the Program into Effect." Write to the University of the State of New York, Albany.

NCPT pamphlet

101 Questions about Public Education is a recent 95-page pamphlet produced by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. The 101 questions were drawn as most representative of country-wide concern for education and the schools from among those which seemed most important and serious to parents.

In spite of a certain formlessness and artificiality which approaches of this sort must have, the volume is well done and most of the 101 answers are sound, neither reactionary nor radical. The publication is worth its price, one dollar.

Write to the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, 700 N. Rush Street, Chicago 11.

ETV record

The impressive record of the strides Edu-

cational Television has taken since 1952, when the FCC reserved 242 TV channels for educational stations, is told interestingly in words and pictures in *This Is Educational Television*, released recently by the National Citizens Committee for Educational Television. We see possibilities for its use with PTA groups, for bulletin board clippings, or just for teachers who wish to become more familiar with this increasingly timely area. Write to the NCCETV, Ring Building, Washington 6, D. C.



For poor readers

Good Books for Poor Readers, a list of reading materials compiled and published by George Spache, head of the Reading Clinic at the University of Florida, Gainesville, was released in January. Approximately 750 items in 54 subject areas are evaluated in the very helpful 114-page book. The price is not known, but Dr. Spache may be reached at the University of Florida.



Teacher recruitment problems

"Who Will Teach Our Children?" was the subject of the 406th Georgetown University Forum. Participants in the TV broadcast were Miss Waurine Walker, president of the NEA; Monsignor Frederick Hochwalt, secretary general of the National Catholic Education Association; and Dr. Samuel M. Brownell, commissioner of education. As they discussed the problems, the thinning ranks of able and capable teachers for the increasing numbers of pupils in the schools was the topic continually referred to. The discussion probed such questions as how to make the rural areas more attractive, how to raise salaries, how to steer secondary students into elementary work, how to improve retirement plans, and how to encourage "liberal arts" students to enter teaching temporarily to help out in the emergency, thereby doing something worthwhile and gaining experience.

"Who Will Teach Our Children?" re-

produced the entire broadcast. The article appeared in the December *School Life*.



Another answer to the critics

"Do You Know This About Our Schools?" presents another answer to the critics and attackers of the school. Writing in the December *Michigan Education Journal*, Russell L. Jenkins points to facts and figures available to refute most of the claims against the school. We don't recommend Mr. Jenkins' article as something new and different, for it is not that. He, as have tens of others since the loudest verbal attacks were made in 1953, points to Wrightstone's studies, studies in Chicago and Cleveland, and to the Eight-Year Study as factual items showing that (while they are not doing a perfect job) the schools are not as poor as the critics have said they are. Just in case you missed the dozens of articles in professional magazines, those in the *Ladies Home Journal*, and the one in the *Kiplinger Magazine*, Mr. Jenkins has something worthwhile to say in defense of the school.



We recommend

"The Classroom as a Learning Laboratory," by Fred P. Barnes. Mr. Barnes depicts the classroom as a place where children learn by *trying* and *doing*, and one where the teacher lets them do but exercises selectivity in their choice of things and events. Selectivity to Mr. Barnes means employment of firsthand, contrived, interpretative, drill or practice, remedial and enriched, and symbolic experiences, according to the child's learning rate and requirements. Variety, planning, differentiation, and refinement are needed to make the classroom truly a learning laboratory. Mr. Barnes' article appeared in the December issue of *Childhood Education*.



The Literary Guild selections for March:

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years old:

A Kiss is Round, by Blossom Budney

Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., Inc., \$2.50.

of contents, or index shows that the book is de-

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years old:

Your Breakfast and the People Who Made It, by Benjamin C. Gruenberg and Leone Adelson, Doubleday & Company, Inc., \$2.00.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years old:

Miss Pickerell Goes To the Arctic, by Ellen MacGregor, Whittlesey House, \$2.25.

For girls 12 to 16 years old:

The Foreigner, by Gladys Malvern, Longmans, Green & Company, \$2.75.

For boys 12 to 16 years old:

George Rogers Clark: Soldier and Hero, by Jeannette Covert Nolan, Julian Messner, Inc., \$3.00.



"Carnival of Books"

Here is the schedule for March of NBC's "Carnival of Books" (consult the newspaper for the time in your locality):

March 6: *Justin Morgan Had a Horse*, by Marguerite Henry, published by Rand McNally.

March 13: *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*, by Eleanor Cameron, published by Little, Brown.

March 20: *Shaken Days*, by Marion Garthwaite, published by Julian Messner.

March 27: *Hurry, Flurry and Skurry*, by Mary and Conrad Buff, published by Viking Press.



Recent recordings

Children's Record Guild:

Pinocchio; grades 1-4; 78 rpm; Schumann's *Childhood Scenes* forms the background to this ageless story. The recent popular song, "Wild Horses," may make the background music familiar.

The Musical Mother Goose; grade K-2; 78 rpm; the best-known children's rhymes are presented with their music arranged for simple dance and rhythm activities.

Do This, Do That; grades K-2; 78 rpm; folk melodies which can be used in dance and free-rhythm activities.

Pedro in Argentina; grades 2-6; 78 rpm; Argentina's folk music, games, and songs are revealed through Pedro's visit.

Jump Back, Little Toad; grade K-3, 78 rpm; includes other songs from Marion Abason's book, *Playtime with Music*: "Birdie in the Tree Top" and the "Be Careful Song." This is a record that will be helpful in teaching consideration and safety.

Young People's Records:

Yankee Doodle; grade 2-6; 78 rpm; songs of our land present folks like "John Henry" and things like "The Erie Cannal."

Little Shepherd of Bibleland; grades 1-4; 78 rpm; how a shepherd got his sheep back to the hillside; and there is music on a shepherd's pipe over 2000 years old.

Peter the Pusher; grades K-1; 78 rpm; Peter yells "Out of my way" and pushes other people around. Eventually he learns his lesson and shows the best of good manners.

There's Gold in California; grades 1-4; 78 rpm; folk song and story dramatically describe the gold-rush days.

The Little Hero!; grades 1-4; 78 rpm; Lentil plays the harmonica and saves the day when the band is sabotaged and can't play.



New film

Young America Films, Inc., announces the release of a new 16 mm. sound film, *A Family of India* (1¼ reels, \$62.50). This is a documentary study of the life of a typical Hindu family of India, designed for social studies classes at the upper elementary level and above.



Reprint of A-V list

Reprints of the good, annotated bibliography, "The 100 Best Books for Your A-V Bookshelf," compiled by William Lewin, which appeared in the October issue of *Audio-Visual Guide*, are now available. Write to *Audio-Visual Guide*, 1630 Springfield Ave., Maplewood, New Jersey. Price 25 cents.

Professional Publications

Alexander Gode, *Interlingua a Prime Vista* (Interlingua at Sight), Storm Publishers, New York: 1954, 79 pages, \$2.00.

Interlingua, a derived international language based on the Western world's common stock of Latin-and-Greek derived words, attempts to do for the field of communication what the metric system has done for scientific measurement. That it achieves this aim exceedingly well is evident from the increasing popularity of Interlingua among research workers the world over.

Interlingua at Sight, a short illustrated reader with keys to pronunciation and grammar, is apparently an attempt to interest the world-minded citizen in the practical possibilities of Interlingua in the multi-lingual situations that an international corporation encounters or that a world traveler faces in going, say, from Spain to France, and from there to Germany, Poland, and Sweden.

Since the book is apparently designed for use in other countries besides the United States, no English explanations are given. The approach is, therefore, almost identical with that found in direct methods texts of the early 1900's. To find out how to stress words, the American reader must, therefore, give careful attention to such explanations as

. . . . In general le accento resta super le vocal precedente le ultime consonante
Parolas con le finales -le, -ne, -re precedite per un vocal ha le accento super le antepenultime syllaba.

In style, the book consists mainly of sentence-annotations of drawings and of illustrated dialogues. The method recommended is essentially one of re-reading everything aloud until absorption is achieved. The complete absence of self-testing exercises, subdivisions, table of contents, or index shows that the book is designed for independent study by individuals with a superior background in the vocabulary and grammar of their native tongue and interest in the subject far above the level of ordinary curiosity.

As a fairly painless way of learning to read the language, *Interlingua at Sight* is a usable and attractively printed book. For learning to speak and understand the language, however, *Interlingua by Ear* would be a desirable sequel. Perhaps the author and publisher already have such a sequel (capitalizing the resources of the tape recorder and phonograph) in mind.

Walter V. Kaulfers

University of Illinois

The First Book of Stage Costume and Make-up.

By Barbara Berk. Franklin Watts, Inc., New York 21, pp. 45. \$1.75.

An excellent book for teachers and young actors. It is very gay with colorful illustrations which could be of great help to community recreation leaders, playground or camp workers in planning skits, costumed parades, stunts, amateur circuses or any special event, where costume and make-up add drama and glamour to the occasion. It is skillfully written, interesting, and has a good index.

Carrie Rasmussen

Madison Public Schools

Miniature Plays. By Madge Miller. The Children's Theatre Press, Anchorage, Ky. pp. 150. \$3.00.

This book contains four of the many plays Madge Miller has adapted for the Knickerbocker Players of Pittsburgh. These miniature plays are written to consume one hour of playing time, which is about the correct time for a children's play. The four classics contained in this book are: *Pinocchio*, *Snow White and Rose Red*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Puss in Boots*. Miss Margo Frye, the producer of Knickerbocker Players, came to believe in 1951 that one-hour children's plays which could be trouped to schools, and assembly programs were needed. In the first season the company played over one hundred engagements and were booked for return engagements and soon went further afield. They are now firmly established and have great plans for the future. These are the first published plays of the troupe.

C. R.



Mary Hill Arbuthnot

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN



Margaret Mary Clark

Edited by MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

Mrs. Arbuthnot is well-known as a writer and lecturer in the field of children's literature. She is the author of CHILDREN AND BOOKS (Scott, Foresman, 1947) and three anthologies, combined in the single volume, THE ARBUTHNOT ANTHOLOGY (Scott, Foresman, 1953).

MARGARET MARY CLARK reviews books of science, social studies, and biography. Miss Clark is head of the Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library, and editor of ADVENTURING WITH BOOKS (National Council of Teachers of English, 1950).

Two old favorites in new dress

Marguerite De Angeli's Book of Nursery and Mother Goose Rhymes. Doubleday, 1954. \$5.00.

It is a long time since we have had a large handsome edition of the Mother Goose rhymes, and this one is a joy. There are 376 jingles, embellished with 260 pictures and innumerable decorations in Mrs. De Angeli's most endearing style. It is a question which are lovelier, her

illustrations are less flamboyant than those she made soft black and white pencil sketches or the pastel colors of her landscapes and gaily costumed people. Over 300 rhymes so liberally illustrated make a big book and some organized grouping of the verses would have helped in using the book. But the beauty of the pictures is its glory and makes this edition one to own, to cherish, and to pass on to the next generation.

M. H. A.

Cinderella. Translated and illustrated by Marcia Brown. Scribner's, 1954. \$2.00. (7-10)



Book of Nursery and Mother Goose Rhymes.



Cinderella

Marcia Brown is doing an inestimable service to some of the best loved folk tales by rescuing them from the obscurity of big collections and giving them the distinction of single books, exquisitely illustrated. In the case of *Cinderella* she has chosen the familiar Perrault version, translated it with admirable simplicity and respect for the source. Her illus-

for the swashbuckling *Puss in Boots*, but in lovely pinks and blues, they are just as romantic. Indeed, with the Marcia Brown touch, *Cinderella* becomes a tale to conjure with, the favorite of favorites, and not to be missed.

M. H. A.

Historical Fiction

The Courage of Sarah Noble. By Alice Dalgliesh. Illustrated by Leonard Weisgard. Scribner's, 1954. \$2.00. (6-10).

In 1954 Alice Dalgliesh made two distinguished contributions to American history for young readers, her *Thanksgiving Story* and *The Courage of Sarah Noble*. The latter is a true story about an eight-year-old girl who, in 1707, travelled into the dangerous wilderness of Connecticut to cook and care for her father. The mother could not go because of a sick baby, but she told Sarah to keep up her courage and sent her off wrapped in a new cloak as warm as her love for her little girl. That cloak became unconsciously a cloak of security to Sarah. When she had to sleep in the forest, with the sound of wolves close to them and her father on guard with a gun or when she slept on the floor of some strange cabin with unfriendly folks, Sarah would draw her precious cloak around her and feel safe from the terrors of the night and warmed by her mother's love. The journey was hard enough, but when the father had finished building their fine new log house, he left Sarah



The Courage of Sarah Noble

with some friendly Indians while he went back to get the rest of the family. Only her mother's words "Keep up your courage, Sarah Noble," and the kindness of the Indians carried Sarah through this last ordeal. Happily there is a satisfying conclusion to Sarah's adventures and she becomes a little girl once more. This is a gripping story, told with compassion and restraint, and its theme is a noble one for children to grow on.

M. H. A.

The Log Cabin in the Forest. By Phyllis Lee Peterson. Illustrated by Ati Forberg. Houghton, 1954. \$2.00. (5-9)

Children might well enjoy *The Log Cabin in the Forest* after the story of Sarah Noble, for it follows the history of just such a cabin as Sarah's father built for his family. The little cabin stood alone in the forest but was never lonely because the woman and the children worked inside the cabin and sang as they worked. And outside the



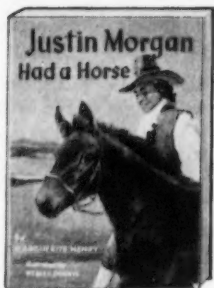
The Log Cabin in the Forest

man and the boys cleared the fields, built furniture, and made syrup from the sap of the trees in the spring. Indians passed, and sometimes soldiers. Later there were neighbors, and the young people danced to fiddle music in the little cabin. But years followed years. The little cabin was deserted, then rediscovered and moved to the heart of a big city where it was restored and made beautiful again as it had been. Now, as a museum, people pass daily through its rooms and the little cabin is never lonely again. This small book gives children an interesting sense of time, and the gentle, poetic flow of the text is reinforced by the illustrations.

M. H. A.

Justin Morgan Had a Horse. By Marguerite Henry. Illustrated by Wesley Dennis. Rand McNally, 1954. \$2.95. (10-..)

Of course this is a horse story and might better be classified under animal stories, but in its completely rewritten form, it is also a remarkably detailed picture of early days in New England. For instance, the chapter about Joel's apprenticeship to the miller is so complete an account of those procedures that no modern child will read "Seven Years! Seven Years!" without a shiver of sympathy for the hapless Joel



whose father is signing him over to something close to slavery. So village life, farm work, the hunger for some form of sports in a hard-working community all come vividly to life in this retelling of the story of the first Morgan horse. The book begins with the journey of the singing master, Justin Morgan, and the boy Joel to collect a debt, and their acquisition of two colts in place of the money. The reader sees little Bub, the undersized colt, through Joel's loving eyes, and by the time that journey is over the reader is as fond of the gay, saucy Bub as Joel is. The story of little Bub's development, his growing prowess both in strength and swiftness are retold with added details and climax in the famous race, which is funnier than ever. But poor Joel's yearning to own his beloved Bub and his continual frustrations are bitter indeed. The disappearance of the horse and the tragic manner of his reunion with Joel are familiar episodes but retold freshly. And the glorious latter years of this remarkable horse give the reader a chance to breathe again and rejoice. Marguerite Henry has done a remarkably fine piece of work filling in the outline of the story as she first told it, and Wesley Dennis has added superb new illustrations to this new edition.

M. H. A.

Winter Danger. By William O. Steele. Illus-

trated by Paul Galdone. Harcourt, 1954. \$2.25. (9-12).

There is no one writing for children today who can recreate wilderness life with the authentic details and emotional impact of William Steele. And *Winter Danger* is one of his finest books. Eleven-year-old Micajah Amis, Cajé for short, had rarely known a roof over his head. His father, taciturn Jared Amis, was a "woody" who knew no trade, could not farm, and as Cajé thought privately, lived more like a possum or a coon than a man. Cajé yearned for a settled home, but there was nothing a motherless boy could do but follow his father even though it meant sleeping in caves and hollow trees,



cold, wet, and hungry most of the time. An encounter with the savage Chickamauga Indians proved almost fatal to both father and son. Then the frantic migration of thousands of squirrels Southward was a sure sign of a hard winter. Resentfully, Jared Amis took his son to his Ma's own people, the Tadlocks in Tennessee, and there he left the boy. At first it was heaven to Cajé to be warm and well fed and to wear his first stockings. But for a woody boy, raised to stand on his own and ask odds of no man, it was a bitter humiliation to live on the generous charity of his relatives. When the winter surpassed everyone's worst expectations, food ran short and even the children went hungry, Cajé could bear it no longer and set off for the wilderness alone. The story of his long hunt and longer night, fighting off wolves and struggling to get back to the farm with the bear meat from his kill is an exciting one. He can hardly believe in the Tadlocks' joy at his return and their profound gratitude for the fresh meat. But it was Aunt Jess who understood the reasons for his flight and discovered some of the details of his terrible night. And from Aunt Jess he

learned the heart-warming lesson that no one need stand alone. Sharing works both ways. Sometimes we are the giver and sometimes the receiver, but only the helpfulness of others made frontier life possible and rewarding. William Steele never moralizes. Caje learned his lesson the hard way and for the first time felt pity for the hard, solitary woodsy, his father.

M. H. A.

The House Next Door. By Virginia Sorensen. Illustrated by Lili Cassel. Scribner's, 1954. \$3.00. (12 ..)

Scribner's is publishing a series of books about the different States at or near the time of their entrance into the union. *Whistle For a*



The House Next Door

Wind by Elizabeth Ogilvie was a boy's story against the background of Maine's struggle for statehood. But Virginia Sorensen has courageously chosen the most difficult state of all, Utah, with the problem of polygamy in full swing. And it is a gay, light hearted book which will delight girls in spite of the controversial problem so fully and frankly treated. For the author presents her subject both from the standpoint of the passionately religious Mormons and the fanatically hostile "Gentiles" bent on abolishing polygamy at all costs. The story is told by way of Gerry McGill's diary. Gerry, a Virginian, is visiting her Aunt Harriet, who is one of the most violent crusaders against Mormonism. Yet next door to Aunt Harriet no less than three

Mrs. Penrowes are living placidly with their three sets of children. Of course, Gerry with teen age curiosity soon goes over the garden wall and is entranced with the multiple children and the three "Aunts" as they are called. Gerry and Millie Penrowe are soon fast friends and Gerry is close to a love affair with the handsome Kim Penrowe. Fortunately Aunt Harriet helps Gerry to make friends with her own people too and there are some amusing escapades and narrow escapes from Aunt Harriet's eagle eye as Gerry brings the two groups of young people together. Not until Gerry learns that Aunt Harriet has been instrumental in having Mr. Penrowe sent to the penitentiary for having three wives, does she realize the seriousness of the situation and the hardships that Statehood will work upon families like the admirable Penrowes. A large gallery of vividly created characters, a stormy problem sympathetically handled, and the wholesome interaction of different customs, ideals, and manners on people of widely different backgrounds, tempered with humor and a sense of fair play, make this a book of unusual value.

M. H. A.

Life in our United States

Little Boy Navajo. By Virginia K. Smiley. Illustrated by Tom Two Arrows. Abelard-Schuman, 1954. (5-8)

Here is an authentic Indian story, simple



Little Boy Navajo.

enough for primary children to read for themselves. It is about Little Boy's earnest desire to be promoted to the important responsibility of herding the family sheep when his sister goes

away to the Mission School. His father tells him he is not big enough, and his mother adds that he must not only be big in size but in heart also. How little Boy proves to his family that he has grown to the right size in both respects, is convincingly told. The illustrations by Tom Two Arrows are colorful, rich in action and also in the designs used by the Navajoes in their jewelry, pottery, and weaving. M. H. A.

Ghost Cat. By Helen Rushmore. Illustrated by Reisie Lonette. Harcourt, 1954. \$2.50. (8-12).

Ten-year-old Glory did not believe the superstitions of her Ozark people even if her brother Lem did. So Glory walked right up to a haunted house at twilight and found—not the ghost of Miss Nancy Rose but a thin little ghost of a cat, pure white with blue eyes. She carried it tenderly home and although everyone was sure



it would bring bad luck, she named it for the gentle ghost and it was allowed to stay. How the four-footed Miss Nancy Rose brought the family good luck instead of bad is the adventurous part of the story. But more important still is the picture of the Ozark people which

emerges: their ways of cooking, rug-making, weaving and marketing, and above all their warm-hearted neighborliness in times of need. Old Granny Baker loses everything only to learn the richness of her neighbor's love. And the children, Glory and Lem, take their part in the generous outpouring of help. The twins, Cubby and Honey, furnish much of the humor of the story and there is plenty of suspense to make it an all round good tale. M. H. A.

The House of the Fifers. By Rebecca Caudill. Decorations by Genia. Longmans, 1954. \$2.75. (11-16)

Fifteen-year-old Monica resented her father's

disapproval of the high school gang she was running around with, but she resented still more his decision to send her for the summer to her uncle's farm in Kentucky. It was the ancestral home of the Fifers and the uncle, aunt, and all the cousins welcomed Monica warmly. She had been there before and loved the farm and her relatives, but now she sulked and shirked like a spoiled child. Not until the terrible drought began to work first one



The House of the Fifers tragedy after another did Monica come out of her selfish brooding. Winning the approval of the handsome Corky played a part, too, and she won it the hard way. For when Monica went to work she really worked and in the process rose to some serious emergencies and discovered that she could stand on her own two feet. By the end of the summer she had won back her place in the Fifer affections. Not only is this a good story of adolescent growing pains but it contains a remarkable gallery of warm human beings, rallying gallantly to tragedy because they have spiritual resources to draw upon.

M. H. A.

More All-of-a-kind Family. By Sidney Taylor.

Illustrated and Published by Follert Pub. Co.

It is good to be able to report that this sequel to *All-of-a-kind Family* is every bit as human and entertaining as the first book. The five girls are older now. Ella has her first beau. Young Charley has come along to upset the all-of-a-kind pattern. Fat, generous, untidy uncle Hyman has found the lady of his dreams. But it is wise, tender Mama and hardworking Papa who make the home a refuge of love and joy for their children and all who come their way. These two keep the feasts and fasts of the Jewish year with a sincerity and deep thankfulness that would surely go with their children all

their days. And the feasts involve so much fun and such mouth-watering foods that every reader will wish he might share them. Each chapter is a complete episode. One of the funniest is about Papa's decision to discipline Henny for staying out too late at night. Unfortunately, in the confusion of her return, Papa lays on sternly and spansks her friend instead of Henny. Another charming chapter is about small Gertie's dilemma when she tells her teacher she can tell time and she can't. How she solves her problem is ingenious. There are some near tragedies in the book but it ends on a joyous note with the family moving to a really palatial seven-room house with a yard. A better emissary for Jewish family life and culture than this choice group of people would be hard to find.

M. H. A.

Corn-Farm Boy. Written and illustrated by Lois Lenski. Lippincott, 1954. \$3.00. (8-12)

The Hoffman family are tenant farmers for Uncle Henry Schumaker on a big Iowa farm.

one unhappy trial, he realizes that running that



Corn-Farm Boy.

glorious machine is not for him. He does, however, have a way with animals, sick or well, wild or domestic, and finds his satisfaction caring for them. Each chapter turns upon a farm activity—pigs farrowing, the new process of contour plowing, planting, wrestling with cockleburrs, caring for sick cattle, trips to town, family picnics and swimming parties. Perhaps

because the young hero is a semi-invalid, this book misses some of the rich, earthy satisfactions of farm life along with the hard work. But neighborly help in times of emergency is well illustrated. How Dick replans his whole life makes a poignant conclusion to this farm story.

M. H. A.



More All-of-a-kind Family.

The story opens with the arrival of a fine new tractor, and Dick, who likes everything about the farm, loves that tractor at first sight. But Dick is handicapped by rheumatism, and after

Social studies

All about Language. By Mario Pei. Decorations by Donat Ivanovsky. J. B. Lippincott. 1954. \$2.75. (12 and up.)

This truly distinguished contribution to the subject field of children's books should find a particular welcome among teachers of English for its "incentive" qualities. Divided into four parts: *What is Language, How Does Language Work?, Our Language, and Other People's Languages*, the very first chapter begins with a challenge on the importance of understandable communication. The origin and history of languages are described, the dying of some words and birth of others. There is a section on the history and geography of the English tongue and its variations, a history and geography of other leading languages of the world, and a final expression of the need of an international language which every people could study along with their native tongue. The material is exceptionally concrete in its presentation, and the author's entertaining style and well chosen examples will appeal to younger readers. The author succeeds also in conveying to children the importance of developing their own language to the best of their ability through reading intelligently, spelling, and pronouncing with care, since their native tongue should be preserved at its best. Mario Pei is Professor of Romance Philology at Columbia University, and the author of books on linguistics in the adult field. His contribution for younger readers is a most worthwhile and important one.

M. M. C.

Mr. Mailman. By Jene Barr. Illustrated by Chauncey Maltman. Albert Whitman & Co. 1954. \$1.25. (6-8)



It was the mailman who whispered to a discouraged Peter that if he wrote a few letters he might receive some mail. Peter wrote three letters, and the account of their journeys and the arrival of the answers will give young readers a good general understanding of the services of the postoffice. The

book with its colorful illustrations will serve a useful purpose in the primary study of community life.

M. M. C.

Superstitious? Here's Why! By Julie Forsyth Batchelor and Claudia De Lys. Illustrated by Erik Blegvad. Harcourt, 1954 \$2.25. (10 and up.)



Superstitious? Here's Why!

Whether it's breaking a mirror, getting out of bed on the wrong side, walking under a ladder, eating breadcrumbs for curly hair, or dozens of other traditional superstitions, the authors have traced them back to their beginnings. The material is well organized under such headings as *Food, Sounds, Gems, Action*, etc., and offers fascinating reading. This is the first time a book of this type has been available at the juvenile level, and adults will find it equally entertaining. Illustrated with humorous black-and-white sketches.

M. M. C.

Famous Indian Tribes. By William Moyers and David C. Cooke. Illustrated by William Moyers. Random House, 1954. \$1.00. 6-10.

Indians are grouped by locales in this brightly illustrated book which describes Forest Indians, Plains Indians, Desert Indians, Acorn Eaters, Woodcarvers and Fishermen. For each group the emphasis is placed on how they lived, the kinds of homes they built, and their greatest heroes. The Forest, Plains and Desert Indians are the more fully treated, and the material will supplement primary Indian units. Its factual presentation, with vocabulary at about fourth grade level would also recommend it to overage slow readers.

M. M. C.

Commemorative Stamps of the U.S.A. By Fred Reinfeld. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1954, \$4.50. (11 and up.)

A stamp collector's own son was the inspiration for this fascinating book on commemorative stamps which mark almost every great event, person, or place in American history. The author has written an absorbing history of the United States as well, as he correlates the stamps with events and people. The stamps are arranged in chronological order, one to a page, beginning with the Columbian issue in 1893, dedicated to Christopher Columbus. 330 stamps in commemorative issues are listed up to the current year. Value, color, and date of issue are included for each stamp, and there is a special index describing the source of the original stamp design and its number in the Scott Stamp Catalog. The book suggests a double purpose, for it offers a highly stimulating approach to American history and to stamp collecting for both children and adults.

M. M. C.

Science

Insects and the Homes They Build. By Dorothy Sterling. Photographs by Myron Ehrenberg. Doubleday & Co. 1954 \$2.50 (9 and up.)

The organization and concreteness of this excellent information on the way insects build their homes will make it invaluable both for



Insects and the Homes They Build.

nature units and for pleasure reading. The insects are grouped according to the type of materials they use for building; mud, wax, bubbles, plants and the like, and there are detailed and absorbing step by step descriptions of the way these small creatures work. There are numerous clear photographs of both interiors and ex-

teriors of the insect family homes as well. The book should serve as a stimulus to children to observe many of the wonders in nature that can be seen first hand.

M. M. C.

Wonders of the Human Body. Written and Illustrated by Anthony Ravielli. Viking Press. 1954 \$2.50 (5-8).

One of the great lacks in the children's book field has been the study of the human body. This remarkably fine contribution to the subject has been written by an artist with a deep interest in anatomy. His inspiration came from the questions asked by his nieces and nephews, and his own efforts to answer them concretely. He has divided his material into four sections; the framework, the muscles, the brain and nervous system, and the digestive system. A brief final summary enumerates the gifts of the spirit which "set man above all other creatures." The book is beautiful in format, and the artist's drawings are of high quality and unusual clarity for the difficult subject. Pictures in two colors on every page illustrate the parts of the body, with clever subordinate sketches showing their particular uses. Many simple analogies make the information understandable to younger readers. It is impossible not to comment on the variety of facial drawings which the artist has used to illustrate some of his anatomical sketches. They are varied and lively and typical of today's boys. Art and anatomy have been well integrated in this unusual book.

M. M. C.

Three Picture Stories

Away Went Wolfgang! Written and illustrated by Virginia Kahl. Scribner's, 1954. \$2.00. (4-8).

Giddy as a merry-go-round, the bright colors of this book will catch young eyes, and the story is charming. It is about a big, bouncing dog who was too exuberant to hold a job. In the little Austrian village where Wolfgang lived, all the dogs were hard-working characters who made Wolfgang feel keenly the disgrace of be-

ing unemployed. Still Wolfgang could not seem to stop running and leaping. When the poor old woman who owned him tried him out with a milk cart, Wolfgang knocked everything helter skelter, spilled all the milk, scared a cat into a fit and almost wrecked the old woman. Eventually, Wolfgang and his sorely tried mistress worked out of their difficulties by going into the butter business instead of milk. This came about in a surprising way, but it made a triumphant and happy conclusion to all their troubles for both Wolfgang and the patient old woman. Quaint, bright illustrations and colorful borders to the pages add to the appeal of this lively tale which is fun to read aloud.

M. H. A.

Journey Cake, Ho! By Ruth Sawyer. Pictures by Robert McCloskey. Viking, 1953. \$2.50. (4-8)

Here is a modern mountaineer variant of "Johnny Cake," "Pancake," and all the other runners-away from fate. Only with the inimitable touch of Ruth Sawyer, this Journey Cake neatly circles a mountain and brings Johnny home with good fortune for himself, his master, and his ma'am. There are gay songs and sour songs, jolly refrains, and a whistling boy who loses his whistle but finds it again. Robert McCloskey's illustrations have never been better. The wild actions, the homespun people, the scenic backgrounds, all bring the mountains and the story vividly to life. The book is beautiful in its blues and browns and it is probably ungrateful to add that the old Norse "Pancake" is still better. Nevertheless, this rare combination of author and artist has resulted in a fresh and delightful book to read aloud.

Whose Little Boy Are You? Written by Betty Van Witsen. Illustrated by Charles Bracker. Jolly Books, 1953. 25c (3-6)

Here is a good 25c book. It is the amusing story of a small boy who *will* run ahead of his mother and so, loses her at the zoo. When the "Mommy-Finder" takes Max in hand, Max finds

him an entertaining person. At each cage or pen he points to the animal and asks, "Is that your mommy?" Max replies appropriately for each animal. For the bear he says, "No! No! No! I'm not fat and furry . . . See there's the bear's little boy!" Finally, a familiar voice cries "Max, Max," and there is Max's own mother at last. This story will probably not deter children from running ahead, but they thoroughly enjoy the dialogue in which it is told. They even accept the crude, bright pictures which appear on every page.

Biography

Babe Ruth: Baseball Boy. By Guernsey Van Riper. Illustrated by William B. Ricketts. Childhood of Famous Americans Series. Bobbs-Merrill. 1954. \$1.75 (8-11)

Babe Ruth was a mischievous young street urchin when he was sent to Saint Mary's Industrial School in Baltimore to attend school and learn a trade. There, the Xavrian Brothers, who were his teachers, helped him develop his baseball talents which later made sports his



From *BABE RUTH: Baseball Boy*,
in *Bobbs-Merrill's*
Childhood of Famous Americans Series

tory. This simply told biography is by the author of *Lou Gehrig* and *Knute Rockne* in the same series. It will have great appeal for younger readers and for over-age slow readers. A brief bibliography lists the author's sources of background material.

M. M. C.

Joe Meek: Man of the West. By Shannon Garst.

Illustrated by Albert Orbaan. Julian Messner Inc. 1954 \$2.75 (11-15)

Shannon Garst's excellent biographies have made a live contribution to the history of the West, and one of her best is the story of Joe Meeks, the pioneer and patriot, who helped Oregon to become an American territory. From the day Joe left his Virginia plantation home in 1828, bound for Western Adventure, his life was dangerous but never dull. When William Sublette refused him a place in his Rocky Mountain Fur Company caravan because of his youth, Joe joined the mule drivers at the rear of the leader's train and was finally allowed to remain. From then on he shared the company adventures; Indian fighting, hunting, and trapping. The mountain country became his home. His path crossed those of many other great pioneers of his day: Jedediah Smith, the Bible-carrying hunter who taught him to read, Jim Bridger, Kit Carson, and Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, who cared for Joe's own part-Indian child until they were massacred. The vitality of this biography as well as its swift action and good characterization should make it popular reading. An extensive bibliography and detailed index will give the book additional value in supplementing a dramatic period in American history.

M. M. C.

Will and Charlie Mayo, Doctor's Boys. By Marie Hammontree. Illustrated by Dorothy Bayley Morse. (Childhood of Famous Americans Series) Bobbs-Merrill 1954. \$1.75 (8-10)

The sincerity of purpose of Doctor Mayo's two little boys in following in their father's footsteps is well brought out in this childlike biography. It describes their early years, and the special qualities of each boy which later helped them to work so cooperatively and successfully together in developing the Mayo Clinic, and in contributing to the cultural progress of their own community. As a vocational story the book could be quite stimulating to younger readers, especially since there is very little material of this type available for the elementary grades. Format is similar to that of other books in the series, with large print and silhouette illustrations.

M. M. C.

For excellent reading material with social studies content, use these new, well written, beautifully illustrated texts in the elementary social studies field —

WAYS OF OUR LAND

Clarence Woodrow Sorensen

OLD WAYS AND NEW WAYS

Lewis Paul Todd • Kenneth S. Cooper

NEW WAYS IN THE NEW WORLD

Lewis Paul Todd • Kenneth S. Cooper

WORLD WAYS

Lewis Paul Todd • Kenneth S. Cooper

SILVER BURDETT

45 EAST 17th STREET, NEW YORK 3, N. Y.
CHICAGO • SAN FRANCISCO
DALLAS • ATLANTA

DUTTON

Spring Juveniles

Command Attention

LITTLE DOG SNIFF AND THE TWINS

by Geraldine Foster Smith

Illustrated by Robert Hennenberger. A lively story of three children and their Scotty who was afraid of bells. A Junior Literary Guild Selection. Ages 4-7 March 31 \$2.50

THEY STOOD ALONE

The Story of Indian Stream

by Henry Davis Nadig and George Avison

Illustrated by George Avison. The thrilling, little-known story of the tiny isolated territory between New Hampshire and Canada that, claimed by both, tried to be an independent republic. Ages 11-14 March 31 \$2.50

ON WINGS OF FIRE

The Story of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Daughter Rose (Mother Alphonsa)

by Marguerite Vance

Illustrated by Nedda Walker. The fascinating life of the restless, headstrong Hawthorne daughter who, after many failures, found her vocation in caring for the sick. Ages 11-16 March 31 \$2.75

THE INNOCENT WAYFARING

by Marchette Chute, author of the widely acclaimed *The Wonderful Winter*

Decorations by the author. Now back in print—the delightful, romantic tale of a runaway girl in 14th century England. Ages 10-14 March 31 \$2.75

THE YOUNG TRAVELER SERIES

Three new volumes in this popular, highly useful series in which young Americans visit a chosen country, gaining an intimate knowledge of the customs, history and people. *Library Journal*: "This series is indeed a welcome addition to material on other lands in story form." *Grade Teacher*: "Provides just what teachers want in readable, informative travel books about European countries since the war, complete with map, an index and good photography." Ages 11-16 March 31 \$3.00 each

NEW VOLUMES

The Young Traveler in NORWAY

by Beth and Garry Hogg

The Young Traveler in GERMANY

by Egon Larsen

The Young Traveler in ITALY

by David Raymond

CHILDREN'S ILLUSTRATED CLASSICS

Three new volumes in this beautiful series will be published April 29

TOM SAWYER by Mark Twain. *Illus. by C. W. Hodges.* Ages 11-15 \$1.95

HUCKLEBERRY FINN by Mark Twain. *Illus. by C. W. Hodges.* Ages 12-15 \$1.95

CHILDREN OF THE NEW FOREST by Captain Marryat. *Illus. by Lionel Edwards.* Ages 12-14 \$2.95

APPROVAL PRIVILEGE

LIBERAL DISCOUNT

E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc.

300 Fourth Avenue

New York 10

**Announcing . . . a new and improved
language arts spelling program
for Grades 1 through 3**

Reading Road to Spelling

- Features a new and more natural way of teaching spelling by the Word-Group Method . . . with all words grouped according to ease and effectiveness of teaching and learning
- Develops understanding and use of words in story context
- Teaches pupils how to use the correct forms of capitalization and punctuation
- Teaches spelling through specially-developed tactile and kinesthetic methods
- Provides a systematic program of "spelling through dictation" — beginning with simple dictated sentences and continuing to the writing of dictated stories and their titles
- Provides understanding and practice in the writing of paragraphs
- Provides abundant review, reteaching, and testing activities in spelling and related language-usage skills
- Provides systematic training in oral skills
- Contains specially-developed visual techniques to aid pupils in spelling, writing, and language usage
- Contains a complete guidebook program for each grade, with pages in the text reproduced to show the answers in red, and with clear-cut, step-by-step procedures set forth on how to carry out each lesson effectively . . . augmented by special developmental activities for pupils needing individual attention.

Write for complete information

Row, Peterson and Company

EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK

For a successful beginning in the language arts



AUTHORS:

**Monroe
Artley
Gray**

We Talk, Spell, and Write

**The Basic Language Program, Grades 1-3,
for teaching spelling, handwriting,
oral and written expression the way
they will be used—TOGETHER**

In everyday life, children—and adults—use the language arts side by side. Now, with **WE TALK, SPELL, AND WRITE**, oral and written expression, spelling, and handwriting can be *taught* together. Because progress in one opens the way to progress in others, learning comes faster—teaching is easier. And the realistic, on-their-own-level learning activities that are part of this program make children see how important it is to be able to write legibly, spell correctly, and express themselves clearly.

Two consumable books per grade (one per semester), with four-color illustrations and detailed lesson plans in Teacher's Editions. Books are correlated with The New Basic Readers. Send for full information.

Chicago 11 Atlanta 5 Dallas 2 San Francisco 5 New York 10

**SCOTT,
FOESMAN
AND COMPANY**

Successful in the Classroom



The GOOD ENGLISH SERIES

Grades 2-8 Shane - Ferris - Keener

The GOOD ENGLISH SERIES is successful in the classroom because it contains:

- A flexible program which can be adapted to children's interests and needs.
- Short self-contained learning situations.
- A pupil's handbook for ready reference in each text.
- Exercises and activities based on children's experiences and interests.

Write for Free Descriptive Brochure.

LAIDLAW BROTHERS

River Forest, Ill.

**Summit,
New Jersey**

**Palo Alto,
California**

**Atlanta 3,
Georgia**

**Dallas 1,
Texas**

LANGUAGE ARTS FOR TODAY'S CHILDREN

Volume II, NCTE Curriculum Series

"I am impressed by the scope of this book. It has so much to offer to teachers and to prospective teachers. Everyone should own and make use of a copy."

Roy P. Ludtke, University of Colorado

"This is a most outstanding contribution to the field of the language arts."

James A. Fitzgerald, Fordham University

"This book is a wonderful compendium of research in the language arts, combined with countless examples of good practice."

Fred G. Walcott, University of Michigan

These, and many other laudatory comments, have been made about this second volume of the curriculum series. The four sections: Bases for the Language Arts Program, Facets of the Language Arts, The Program in Action, Building and Appraising a Language Arts Program. Thirteen chapters dealing with specific problems. 413 pages. Beautifully bound. Illustrated.

Stock No. M27-11

\$2.35 (members) \$3.75 (nonmembers)

LANGUAGE ARTS PAMPHLETS

For low cost, high quality material on working with the language arts, these reports of the National Conference on Research in English are not excelled!

Interrelationships among the Language Arts (Reading, writing, speaking, and listening)

P56-29

\$.65

Readability (Influence of content, style, vocabulary and typography)

P56- 3

\$.60

Readiness for Reading and the Related Language Arts (Reading, oral and written language, spelling, vocabulary, writing)

P56-20

\$.35

Child Development and the Language Arts (Significant findings in studies of child development)

P56-25

\$.75

Factors That Influence Language Growth (Effects of home, school, and community)

P56-26

\$.60

Areas of Research in the Language Arts (Needed research in language expression, reading, speech, and listening)

Place your orders this spring so that you will have your material ready when school starts in the fall. Fall orders are sometimes delayed, because of the huge number placed in September and October. Send your orders and remittance to:

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

704 SOUTH SIXTH STREET CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

for lasting **SPELLING POWER**



THE NEW GOALS IN SPELLING

Grades 2-8

by May Lambader

Dr. William Kottmeyer

America's spelling authorities, Lambader and Kottmeyer, give you a spectacular revision based on phonetic and structural skills. With **THE NEW GOALS IN SPELLING** your youngsters develop *lasting* spelling power.

This is the way you use this new program in teaching spelling . . .

You teach children to translate sounds into symbols.

You teach spelling words that children need to use (from extensive research by Dr. Kottmeyer).

You teach phonetic and structural skills, beginning in the second grade.

You review these skills in the first five units at each level before going on.

You use the Dictionary Helps to illustrate word meanings; emphasize structural skills; teach diacritical marks; show correct pronunciation.

You emphasize proof-reading as a skill, starting in second grade.

You correlate spelling with the language arts program at every opportunity, in these ways—use of words in context;
practice in correct usage in spelling exercises;
development of meaning;
extra assignments for creative use of words and skills.

THE NEW GOALS IN SPELLING gives you the tools to teach spelling as a *cluster* of skills for life-long use.

WEBSTER  **PUBLISHING COMPANY**
ST. LOUIS 3 DALLAS 1 PASADENA 2

what's
new

ENRICHMENT READERS

Come With Us (pre-primer level), *Under the Apple Tree* (primer level), *Open the Gate* (first-reader level) contain a variety of delightful stories, some fanciful, some realistic. These books provide additional material which the slow learner will be able to read with a minimum amount of guidance and the fast reader independently. Abundantly illustrated in full color. A Teachers' Manual is available for each book.

RECORDS FOR AUDITORY TRAINING AND SPEECH DEVELOPMENT

An album of three LP records especially designed for use with the first-year program of the Ginn Basic Readers. It can also be used for remedial work in the second and third grades. In the series are lessons on initial consonants, initial blends, one lesson on digraphs, two on final consonants, rhyming words, and two lessons on review and evaluation. Highly motivated material. Sixteen lessons, each from four to seven minutes in length. A Guide is included. \$7.50 net.

FOR
THE
GINN
BASIC
READERS



**GINN AND
COMPANY
PUBLISHERS**

Home Office:

Boston

Sales Offices:

New York 11

Chicago 16

Atlanta 3

Dallas 1

Columbus 16

San Francisco 3

Toronto 7